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THE BOOKMAN

JOHN FARRAR, *Editor*

THE POINT OF VIEW

THEY DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY IN FLORIDA

FLORIDA is the land of enchantment and of magic. Overnight they transform a mangrove wilderness populated with reptiles into a city where Lucullus would have felt at home after he had been superseded by Pompey, even though he had had to have a round of golf and a dash in the swimming pool to prepare him for his daily feast. They take the earth that is void and without form and convert it into a garden with which the Hesperides would have been satisfied. And even though the spirit of God apparently does not move upon the face of their waters they succeed with great ease in making it do for their new creations what it did for Venice and Amsterdam.

The magicians of Florida are motivated by money. They have a continuous money hunger that wealth does not satisfy; the more they accumulate the hungrier they get. There are indications, however, that some of them may cast their infirmity, may purge themselves of their besetting sin. This hope has been engendered by a recent gesture by the greatest of them. He has given a valuable tract of land in the heart of the city that he created and a considerable sum of money to a Board of Trustees that they may found a university which shall perpetuate the memory of his father, a Yankee preacher who went to Florida fifty years ago to regain his health and redeem his fellows. In addition he has engineered a drive in the adjacent city of Miami, which a short time ago had a population of 20,000 and today numbers 200,000. This has been so successful that it will supply the "liquid assets".

We "assisted" at the laying of the cornerstone of the university a few weeks ago. Several of the buildings will be ready for occupancy in the autumn. They have no president, no pedagogical plan, no administrative policy save to thrust culture upon Floridians; that is, upon anyone who has been continuously in Florida for three months. So far there is no one connected with the scheme who has had any contact with education save school teachers and

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superintendents. Nor did any well known educator attend the function, though Hamilton Holt was introduced as the president of the oldest educational institution in the state. He had apparently jumped in one leap from politics to pedagogy. But a few days later an ex-president of a New England college whose trustees had found him "temperamentally unfit", as they say in the army, was to be seen browsing about. He may get the job and have an opportunity to prove that the ideas and theories which he set forth in "The Century Magazine" a few months ago are practicable.

It is an uncommon and strange delusion that a university can be made of stucco and cement. Or is it a delusion on our part that the faculty makes a university and the president makes the faculty? That would seem to be the history of all successful universities. But they do things differently in Florida. They buy automobiles without dreaming of garages. "Where do you keep your car?" said we to a Floridian from Paterson, New Jersey. "Where do you suppose I keep it — in the street of course", he replied. If they get money enough they may be able to operate Miami University without a faculty. You can do anything with money in Florida save buy happiness or a good conscience.

THE WITS FOLLOW FANTASY

THE smart young men are turning to parables. Having had their share of realism and banter, and being perhaps afraid to express their idealistic moods in a manner straightforward, they are calling in the aid of gnomes, elves, and suchlike creatures. Marc Connelly tells us in his fine play, "The Wisdom Tooth", that a man must be a man, and that being a man means seeing your own aspirations clearly. Christopher Morley's "Thunder on the Left" is the negative version of the same theme. Heywood Broun's "Gandle Follows His Nose" is a more picaresque rendering. It is still the cry of the thwarted; but now our authors are protesting, not against America but against themselves, not against Puritanism but against Creation. Three more interesting literary performances than these will be hard to find, and each represents by far the best work of its author.

"Gandle Follows His Nose" has some of the quality of Donn Byrne's "Messer Marco Polo" and a deal of the impudence of Cabell's "Jurgen". It is a wise, pungent, fiery little book. This sort of thing is seldom so well done in America. It expresses Mr. Broun's ideas about life far more clearly than he has ever been able to express them in his column, for there he is being so pulled about by the constant annoyances and sympathies he has for current things that he often confuses the instant feeling with the larger belief. This "Brounonian" philosophy is not a new one. Bunny Gandle, who must be shown things, who must learn for himself what is right or what is wrong for him, comes finally to comfortable and fairly conservative views of life. Is this not, perhaps, socially, a wasteful program? Is the individual never justified in taking some of the information handed to him from the experience of others and acting on it, at least until he has proved it to be wrong?

Heywood Broun's gift as a columnist has always been his delightful naive assumption that each new sensation of his is new to the world, and his honest feeling that it *is* new makes it,

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usually, interesting to the world. Yet the philosophy of Broun, the attitude of Broun, the success of Broun, is based upon one thing and one thing alone — the gospel of the amateur. Again and again he defends this amateur position in criticism and in life. Bunny Gandle is an amateur. When he becomes professional in his attitude toward life, he will be ready for the grave. There can be no quarrel with this point of view. We are most of us amateurs and glad to be so. Yet it is often annoying to be told that this is the only method of meeting the problems of living. The majority of us read books, see plays, enjoy them or dislike them, comment on them in conversation or in print. *As amateurs.* There are those, of course, whose long years of reading and study have made it possible to analyze, to evaluate these same books and plays from a professional standpoint. But to most of us, half the fun of life is in being amateurish about it. The quality of writing in "Gandle Follows His Nose" is far from amateur. It is considered, rich, eloquent prose. A book which should meet with much the same speculative comment as greeted "Thunder on the Left".

IOWA READERS

FROM the farm country in Iowa comes the following letter:

DEAR SIR:

In the January BOOKMAN the article "What We Read and Why We Read It" interested me very much. The following paragraph particularly arrested my attention and caused me to wonder if by any chance the author had ever had friends among farm folk:

"Farmers, fishermen, sailors — all the types which rarely if ever read — probably maintain better health, live longer, and are — at least while they remain young and vigorous — quite as happy as those who seek from printed pages either escape from reality or wider range of understanding of reality."

The fishermen and sailors may speak for themselves but I must speak for the farmer. I have lived on an Iowa farm for fifty years and aside from reading the New Providence items in the Eldora "Ledger" I have even read THE BOOKMAN.

If I had not scanned its pages I would never have known that the word had gone out that farmers did not read. The farmers here about, besides reading agricultural journals, read the best magazines of the day, and the new fiction as well as the classics. I think a few of them also read the Bible and a few of the ones more careless with their health have read Wells's History.

The farmers around here really have never thought it particularly unhealthful to read. Surely a middle west community of farmers ought to be typical of farm folk in general, and as long as we have college graduates and high school graduates and men and women who think and plan for the best things for their communities, we will have people who read.

We shall not at once deduce from these statements that farmers and their folk are the most voracious of the nation's readers. We do not visualize a husky lad atop a tractor waving a volume of Wells over the native fields. Yet it is true that farmers read, and read a great deal. It is also true that sailors read, when they are equipped by education to do so and can obtain books. Mr. Bennett, in the article referred to, was doubtless speaking in terms far more general than one would at first think. The American farmer is one thing—the farm class all over the world is another. In general, tillers of the soil have not been the greatest readers. This condition obviously is changing in America. More and more it will change, too, with the spread of the radio; for the mind cannot be stimulated by the various contacts made over the air and be content to remain inactive. More and more the magazine will be read and, more slowly, perhaps, the book will come into its own. It is

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the city dwellers who will not find the time to read in the future—not the farmers.

ARE WE TOLERANT?

WHILE most of us, thinking of the Fundamentalists' attacks upon education, the professional reformers' successful coup with the Volstead prohibition amendment, the lynching of Negroes by lustful Ku Klux Klansmen and ignorant poor whites, the attempted resurrection of ancient blue laws in the south and northeast, the constant menace to free speech and heaven only knows what else — while most of us, seeing these things, regard such intolerance with some concern, D. H. Lawrence is rumbling forth statements from beneath his black beard that tolerance itself, and not its opposite, is the besetting sin of the present day world.

Mr. Lawrence says of one of the gummiest characters in his latest book: "But he had the insidious modern disease of tolerance", and amplifies his statement as the numbers on the pages grow larger. Mr. Lawrence is evidently a practitioner of his precepts. Especially of things American is Mr. Lawrence intolerant. Ignoring our stake burnings, race riots, bouncing Babbittry and the like as not worth mentioning, the author of "Sons and Lovers" plunges us into an almost inconceivable despair by wondering whether this country is "really the great melting-pot, where men from the creative continents were smelted back again, not to a new creation, but down into the homogeneity of death? Was it the great continent of the undoing, and all its peoples the agents of the mystic destruction! Plucking, plucking at the created soul in a man, till at last it plucked out the growing germ, and left him a creature of mechanism and automatic reaction, with only one inspiration, the desire to pluck the quick out of every living spontaneous creature."

Now if our darkest sin is tolerance, how can all this be? How can we be plucking at the soul of man, having "only one inspiration, the desire to pluck the quick out of every living spontaneous creature"? If Mr. Lawrence does not here describe intolerance we should like to know what he does describe; and thus we may not be so bad as he is inclined to think we are.

BUSINESS AND THE ARTS

MISS ANNE MORGAN is determined that, as women start organizing for their comfort and happiness in a large way, they shall not do it within narrow horizons, as perhaps men have done. The American Woman's Association, of which she is treasurer, is to build its new and sumptuous clubhouse on West Twenty Third Street in New York City. To raise money for the completion of this project, the Association is increasing its membership. Its great clubhouse is designed as a meeting place for executive business and professional women. The mixture of the two types is obviously of the highest importance. That business women are interested in art and literature is said to be true. That women whose life work is artistic should be interested in business is obvious. The one to the other could be not only entertaining but exceedingly useful. Both types should be urged to join this organization, with its provisions for a home for those who

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do not wish to be dependent on family or friends, and with the opportunity it offers for the finest associations. Already the professional women are assisting the club in many ways. The editorial board of one of the large women's magazines have presented the club with a complete reference library. A writer bought one thousand dollars' worth of stock with the first royalties on her first book. Such women as Ida Clyde Clarke, Ida Tarbell, Fannie Hurst, Lula Vollmer, Kathleen Norris, Madame Schumann-Heink, Galli-Curci, and Frances Alda are members and have shown an active interest in the work. No other organization of which we know offers quite the same opportunities for an interchange of ideas and of practical benefits. Its founders and promoters are to be congratulated on their foresight and their zeal. The clubhouse and the Association should do much toward a development of that fusion of interest and play of discussion which in the long run makes for the truest culture.

SANDBURG AND STALLINGS

THEIR names are grouped here, not because they have the same publisher, but because they have achieved a somewhat similar result — they have with art created beauty from husky material of American life. Stallings has done an amazing thing. In three mediums — the play, the novel, and the motion picture — he has shown that he could report life in a way that was emotionally satisfying and yet intellectually believable. He has a great creative mind, sharpened by the war, driven by nerves, and aided by a profound basic honesty. Similarly Carl Sandburg. Sandburg's inspirations have come from simple things and people. He has watched the prototypes of Lincoln and has known them. He has worked slowly and resolutely for years, steadily achieving success, and has now won nation wide recognition with his Lincoln biography, where before he had only that reputation which it is possible for a poet to have in this country.

Here, then, are two men who have taken simple materials of simple people and made them into poetry, drama, biography. Yet, in the midst of much praise, one begins to find traces of caviling. One says that Mr. Sandburg, in attempting to become popular, has allowed himself to be sentimental. Another, that Mr. Stallings, in reaching for greater success, has capitalized the war experience. Who are the ones who say these things? Look carefully. You will find that they are the friends who praised most highly in the days of struggle. Perhaps criticism has always taken this pathway. Perhaps it is impossible to be successful with the crowd and still retain the good will of the few. If it had been possible to bomb the office of a certain publication which recently printed an article sneering at Mr. Stallings and to slit its smug author up the middle with a Toledo blade, right might again have been restored in the world. The literary cliques of New York City and of Chicago are silly, treacherous, worshipful of success and highly jealous of it. They raise their own members to heights partly by their own efforts and then make every attempt to tear them down.

From all this noise and flurry, a few people, a few pieces of fine work, stand out. Laurence Stallings and Carl Sandburg are as sure to live in the literary history of this country as any two men now writing.

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HOW TO WASTE MATERIAL

A Note on My Generation

By F. Scott Fitzgerald

EVER since Irving's preoccupation with the necessity for an American background, for some square miles of cleared territory on which colorful variants might presently arise, the question of material has hampered the American writer. For one Dreiser who made a single minded and irreproachable choice there have been a dozen like Henry James who have stupid-got with worry over the matter, and yet another dozen who, blinded by the fading tail of Walt Whitman's comet, have botched their books by the insincere compulsion to write "significantly" about America.

Insincere because it is not a compulsion found in themselves — it is "literary" in the most belittling sense. During the past seven years we have had at least half a dozen treatments of the American farmer, ranging from New England to Nebraska; at least a dozen canny books about youth, some of them with surveys of the American universities for background; more than a dozen novels reflecting various aspects of New York, Chicago, Washington, Detroit, Indianapolis, Wilmington, and Richmond; innumerable novels dealing with American politics, business, society, science, racial problems, art, literature, and moving pictures, and with Americans abroad at peace or in war; finally several novels of change and growth, tracing the swift decades for their own sweet lavender or protesting vaguely and ineffectually against the industrialization of our beautiful old American life. We have had an Arnold Bennett for every five towns — surely by this time the foundations have been laid! Are we competent only to toil forever upon a never completed first floor whose specifications change from year to year?

In any case we are running through our material like spendthrifts — just as we have done before. In the Nineties there began a feverish search for any period of American history that hadn't been "used", and once found it was immediately debauched into a pretty and romantic story. These past seven years have seen the same sort of literary gold rush; and for all our boasted sincerity and sophistication, the material is being turned out raw and undigested in much the same way. One author goes to a midland farm for three months to obtain the material for an epic of the American husbandmen! Another sets off on a like errand to the Blue Ridge Mountains, a third departs with a Corona for the West Indies — one is justified in the belief that what they get hold of will weigh no more than the journalistic loot brought back by Richard Harding Davis and John Fox, Jr., twenty years ago.

Worse, the result will be doctored up to give it a literary flavor. The farm story will be sprayed with a faint dilution of ideas and sensory impressions from Thomas Hardy; the novel

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of the Jewish tenement block will be festooned with wreaths from "Ulysses" and the later Gertrude Stein; the document of dreamy youth will be prevented from fluttering entirely away by means of great and half great names — Marx, Spencer, Wells, Edward Fitzgerald — dropped like paper weights here and there upon the pages. Finally the novel of business will be cudgeled into being satire by the questionable but constantly reiterated implication that the author and his readers don't partake of the American commercial instinct.

And most of it — the literary beginnings of what was to have been a golden age — is as dead as if it had never been written. Scarcely one of those who put so much effort and enthusiasm, even intelligence, into it, got hold of any material at all.

To a limited extent this was the fault of two men — one of whom, H. L. Mencken, has yet done more for American letters than any man alive. What Mencken felt the absence of, what he wanted, and justly, back in 1920, got away from him, got twisted in his hand. Not because the "literary revolution" went beyond him but because his idea had always been ethical rather than æsthetic. In the history of culture no pure æsthetic idea has ever served as an offensive weapon. Mencken's invective, sharp as Swift's, made its point by the use of the most forceful prose style now written in English. Immediately, instead of committing himself to an infinite series of pronouncements upon the American novel, he should have modulated his tone to the more urbane, more critical one of his early essay on Dreiser.

But perhaps it was already too late. Already he had begotten a family of hammer and tongs men — insensitive, suspicious of glamour, preoccupied exclusively with the external, the contemptible, the "national" and the drab, whose style was a debasement of his least effective manner and who, like glib children, played continually with his themes in his maternal shadow. These were the men who manufactured enthusiasm when each new mass of raw data was dumped on the literary platform — mistaking incoherence for vitality, chaos for vitality. It was the "new poetry movement" over again, only that this time its victims were worth the saving. Every week some new novel gave its author membership in "that little band who are producing a worthy American literature". As one of the charter members of that little band I am proud to state that it has now swollen to seventy or eighty members.

And through a curious misconception of his work, Sherwood Anderson must take part of the blame for this enthusiastic march up a blind alley in the dark. To this day reviewers solemnly speak of him as an inarticulate, fumbling man, bursting with ideas — when, on the contrary, he is the possessor of a brilliant and almost inimitable prose style, and of scarcely any ideas at all. Just as the prose of Joyce in the hands of, say, Waldo Frank becomes insignificant and idiotic, so the Anderson admirers set up Hergesheimer as an anti-Christ and then proceed to imitate Anderson's lapses from that difficult simplicity they are unable to understand. And here again critics support them by discovering merits in the very disorganization that is to bring their books to a timely and unregretted doom.

Now the business is over. "Wolf" has been cried too often. The public, weary of being fooled, has gone back to its Englishmen, its memoirs and its prophets. Some of the late brilliant

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boys are on lecture tours (a circular informs me that most of them are to speak upon "the literary revolution"!), some are writing pot boilers, a few have definitely abandoned the literary life — they were never sufficiently aware that material, however closely observed, is as elusive as the moment in which it has its existence unless it is purified by an incorruptible style and by the catharsis of a passionate emotion.

Of all the work by the young men who have sprung up since 1920 one book survives — "The Enormous Room" by E. E. Cummings. It is scarcely a novel; it doesn't deal with the American scene; it was swamped in the mediocre downpour, isolated — forgotten. But it lives on, because those few who cause books to live have not been able to endure the thought of its mortality. Two other books, both about the war, complete the possible salvage from the work of the younger generation — "Through the Wheat" and "Three Soldiers", but the former despite its fine last chapters doesn't stand up as well as "Les Croix de Bois" and "The Red Badge of Courage", while the latter is marred by its pervasive flavor of contemporary indignation. But as an augury that someone has profited by this dismal record of high hope and stale failure comes the first work of Ernest Hemingway.

II

"In Our Time" consists of fourteen stories, short and long, with fifteen vivid miniatures interpolated between them. When I try to think of any contemporary American short stories as good as "Big Two-Hearted River", the last one in the book, only Gertrude Stein's "Melanctha", Anderson's "The Egg", and Lardner's "Golden Honeymoon" come to mind. It is the account of a boy on a fishing trip — he hikes, pitches his tent, cooks dinner, sleeps, and next morning casts for trout. Nothing more — but I read it with the most breathless unwilling interest I have experienced since Conrad first bent my reluctant eyes upon the sea.

The hero, Nick, runs through nearly all the stories, until the book takes on almost an autobiographical tint — in fact "My Old Man", one of the two in which this element seems entirely absent, is the least successful of all. Some of the stories show influences but they are invariably absorbed and transmuted, while in "My Old Man" there is an echo of Anderson's way of thinking in those sentimental "horse stories", which inaugurated his respectability and also his decline four years ago.

But with "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife", "The End of Something", "The Three Day Blow", "Mr. and Mrs. Elliot", and "Soldier's Home" you are immediately aware of something temperamentally new. In the first of these a man is backed down by a half breed Indian after committing himself to a fight. The quality of humiliation in the story is so intense that it immediately calls up every such incident in the reader's past. Without the aid of a comment or a pointing finger one knows exactly the sharp emotion of young Nick who watches the scene.

The next two stories describe an experience at the last edge of adolescence. You are constantly aware of the continual snapping of ties that is going on around Nick. In the half stewed, immature conversation before the fire you watch the awakening of that vast unrest that descends upon the emotional type at about eighteen. Again there is not a single recourse to

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exposition. As in "Big Two-Hearted River", a picture — sharp, nostalgic, tense — develops before your eyes. When the picture is complete a light seems to snap out, the story is over. There is no tail, no sudden change of pace at the end to throw into relief what has gone before.

Nick leaves home penniless; you have a glimpse of him lying wounded in the street of a battered Italian town, and later of a love affair with a nurse on a hospital roof in Milan. Then in one of the best of the stories he is home again. The last glimpse of him is when his mother asks him, with all the bitter world in his heart, to kneel down beside her in the dining room in Puritan prayer.

Anyone who first looks through the short interpolated sketches will hardly fail to read the stories themselves. "The Garden at Mons" and "The Barricade" are profound essays upon the English officer, written on a postage stamp. 'The King of Greece's Tea Party", "The Shooting of the Cabinet Ministers", and "The Cigar-store Robbery" particularly fascinated me, as they did when Edmund Wilson first showed them to me in an earlier pamphlet, over two years ago.

Disregard the rather ill considered blurbs upon the cover. It is sufficient that here is no raw food served up by the railroad restaurants of California and Wisconsin. In the best of these dishes there is not a bit to spare. And many of us who have grown weary of admonitions to "watch this man or that" have felt a sort of renewal of excitement at these stories wherein Ernest Hemingway turns a corner into the street.

LET IT BE DONE SIMPLY

By Helene Mullins

IF we should feel a need to separate,
As once we felt a need to meet, and press
Hand upon hand in delicate caress,
Should we choose solemn words to consecrate
To our last sacred hour? Should we pour
Grief's dismal wine for our young mouths to drain,
Or set bright laughter on the broken chain
That bound our hearts, and binds them now no more?

Are lovers ever honest when they start
One to the east, one to the west or south,
One in contempt, one in a crown of fears?
Shall two not ever part as flowers part,
Relinquishing the touch of mouth on mouth
Without reproach, without disdain, or tears?

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GAIETY FOR THE SOLEMN

By Irwin Edman

ONE of the pet illusions of the reformer and the intellectual is that it is impossible to be serious without being solemn. Those deeply concerned with alleviating the human lot or understanding the human scene have always been shy of laughter. The significant questions of human destiny are not to be approached with a smile. God, misery, and salvation are no joke.

The distrust of the light heart in contemporary thinking has been disastrous. The literature of social reform, of philosophy and religion — as well as the fiction influenced by them — has become increasingly melancholy and forbidding. The literature of the whimsical and gay has moved increasingly, sometimes to the verge of pain, in the direction of nonsense. On the one hand are the earnest seekers after truth or salvation whose solemnity frightens away or puts to sleep those who might otherwise have been saved. On the other hand are the frivolists who, having in their early youth decided that existence was in essence ridiculous, refuse to take any of its accidents *au grand sérieux*. Cherishing like a traditional clown their private sense of tragedy, they prefer to skim over the more amiable surface of things with an epigram or a joke. Thus a credo which, preached with a little winsomeness and laughter, might have converted thousands is intoned to a sombre and impotent few. Comedy that might have been used, as Meredith insisted at its best it is used, as the polished tool of social betterment, becomes a nonsense void of all use and relative to no mortal concerns. The devil gets all the good jokes as well as all the good tunes. The philosopher, the theologian, the political prophet, are immured by a wall of impenetrable dulness from effecting the fortunes or clarifying the insights of mankind.

It is not hard to see why for those plumbing the painful recesses of action or attempting fundamentally to alter its conditions, humor is at a discount and the humorist is regarded with suspicion. One may not always be disturbingly aware of what Unamuno, the Spanish philosopher, conceives to be the characteristic human agony, "the tragic sense of life". But once the hopeful elasticity of life is over, perhaps the most perduring of all feelings about life is that it is a serious, if not a tragic, matter. A little observation will steady the most elfin of mortals; by forty almost everyone is sober. The social worker or reformer has no patience with the glib smartness of the gilded literati. He has seen too much of the rending misery which constitutes the lot of a heartbreaking proportion of his fellows. Novelists like Zona Gale or Willa Cather, Sherwood Anderson or D. H. Lawrence, are endeavoring to trace the passionate hidden currents that flow below the conventional quiet surface of a man's being, or the fine compulsive threads which bound his days and make his destiny. They cannot be expected to pause for grimaces or bon mots. The contemporary philosopher has not time

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to amuse or to be amused if he is to make any sensible progress in piecing together a new intellectual house of life for his fellow moderns out of the shreds of decaying religions or the rough stones of a growing science.

Men and women engaged in such enterprises know there is something fatal and disorganizing about laughter. It arises, they know, out of the perceptions of the loose ends and crazy juxtapositions of living. Its echoes of mockery, its chortles of delight, have convulsed many a serious venture in the interpretation or the betterment of life. The psychiatrists have made us familiar with those painful cases where melancholy has rendered a patient absolutely incapable of action. Terrible doubt, such as Tolstoy's, may drive a man to the pit of nihilism. Skepticism, if it is not in the hands of so healthy a soul as David Hume, may drive a man mad through the hideous fantoms of his own mind. Any alienist can tell you what comes of taking life too seriously. No one has yet done justice to the dangers of taking it too lightly. But the serious minded know why they are afraid of giving play to their perception of the absurd. They might eventually come to take all existence as a joke. And in that grand engulfing farce, what would their own so absorbing activities become if not simply minor causes for amusement?

Small wonder then that the farceur is not at a premium in a scientific laboratory. It was not in the ribaldry of a tavern that Spinoza learned to look at time under the perspective of eternity. That very concentration and intensity that goes with the enunciation of grand thoughts or the achievement of great work, is inimical to the mood of the picnic or the clown. Say what one will about the business of being too solemn, high thinking is not produced during fits of giggles, and a joke is more dangerously out of place at events far more promising than funerals.

It is easy to understand, on the other hand, why "the merry and bright" among mankind have been inclined to fight shy of those who were trying to save or enlighten them. The leader of a moral improvement society is not notably good company on a lark, and the practising philosopher is not commonly regarded as the life of the party. The light hearted may indeed well argue that in a world where no rational ends are clearly discernible, the only ends worth pursuing are those which come with their own clear certificates of joy. No bleak enterprise toward future bliss can compare with their own frequent moments of uncaring mirth. What would a perfect world be save one that gave its denizens precisely such a sense of truant wellbeing as the gay and the casual have even now. There is a finality about a laugh or a chuckle that is not to be found in the systems of the wise. A philosopher has to argue his case; a joke or a whimsy, if it brings so much as a smile, does not have to prove that it is amusing. A favored image of Olympus is that of the gods rocking with laughter. The great primitive poets could imagine no more divine diversion.

The light hearted may also have observed that for all the solemnity of the sages, conditions on the planet have not been radically improved since the dawn of written wisdom, and if at all, not necessarily by or according to the wise. Apparently, the grave have not secured bliss for others; they have even lost it for themselves. Wisdom seems too often to have darkened the spirits or soured the tempers of those not content to regard with joy the diverting and pointless spectacle of human folly. The plain man, as Plato long ago

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pointed out, has distrusted all grave philosophers. The poet has distrusted all practical plain men. It is neither among the practical nor among the profound that the race has sought the instances and metaphors of happiness. The locus of contentment has been found rather in the careless blue eyes of childhood, the rapture of the lark, the sounds of singing men or clinking glasses in a tavern, or in the bronze savage lolling on white sands by blue waters under a tropical sun.

The gay can reckon up their assets with a jovial mathematics of remembered goods. But they are usually too busy experiencing delight to fret over its arithmetic, too intent upon it to criticize — or note the criticisms of the grave. The latter have likewise been too busy to do more than scold the happy vagabonds. In their pauses from their own unhappy labors, they have taken the time to envy the gay. They have never understood them. And in failing to understand them, they have missed the comprehension of one of the dear ingredients of that happiness which they were so busily arranging for the race.

There is a danger in our own day that the world of ideas is becoming a feud between the happy trifler and the melancholy sage. A new Puritanism has come upon us, the cold morality of a machine age. It is precisely from these austerities of standardized work and standardized play that many are fleeing now to nonsense and satirical laughter. It is beginning to seem the more amiable part of wisdom to snatch at such gaiety as can still be found in the pauses of days that have been subdued to machines. There are moral values in abandon for a generation whom machines and formulas have robbed of all resilience. The whistling loafer, the irresponsible wit, have a lesson to teach the grave deacons of contemporary thought.

The loafer and the wit are, in the first place, characterized by insouciance. They are the born enemies of all dogmatism, the amiable foes of all rigidity. They cannot be dragooned by money or creed or ambition into solemnity; they will not crowd their bubbling spirits into a musty system of thought. The timid majority, coerced by a job or by an idea into slavery, look on these freemen with a concentration which is three quarters envy. The current popularity of a tramp literature is testimony to the hunger there is among us for a life that escapes the regular, the respectable, the ordained.

But to be a vagabond or to go to the South Seas is not to escape the mold or the treadmill. The missionary carries his drab Protestantisms with him to the Orient; one may wander far with a stay-at-home heart. There is, however, a more facile and certain form of vagabondage. Arthur Machen in "The Secret Glory" describes a boy who managed to bear the brutality and convention of school life by cherishing in his mind a white "secret glory". There is a less unctuous way of escaping from surrender to dulness or brutality. The comic spirit will keep one alive to the absurdity of those solemn conditions and conventions by which one would otherwise be spiritually enslaved. Equipped with the antitoxin of laughter, one can live even in a standardized society without being too impressed by its standards. Perhaps to maintain gaiety rather than, as Pater supposed, to maintain ecstasy, is success in life.

The wits and loafers have another claim to the attention of the sober. For theirs is a gusto and exuberance that the serious minded too often miss. Much contemporary writing and think-

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ing gives the impression that it has been done by tired men. The author of many an essay toward the betterment of the world seems to have gritted his teeth and girded his loins before he began. One can see him forcing himself heavily to sketch a design for a perfect state in which one imagines he would be much too weary to live. Even when the profound are happy, they never permit evidence of that fact to gleam across their professional pages. To read some of the most important of contemporary writers, one would think they had never had a gay moment or that they could not tolerate such a heresy among others.

No wonder the instinct of the common man turns away from all such melancholy saviors. From Rabelais to Robert Benchley he sees among the harlequins and pierrots an abounding vitality he has seldom observed among their more responsible brothers. For however various the forms of happiness may be, they are kneaded out of the dough of ordinary human vitality. The surest evidence of vitality is in the play temper, the surest instances of it in the playtime of the race. Certainly what makes the word "play" so completely delightful in its associations is its suggestion of abundance, spontaneity and freedom. In a really ordered society, all activities would be like those at present found in games, in jokes, and in the play of wits. One is grateful to those who even in a disordered civilization can take experience lightly, gaily, and with ease. If nature were not careless and civilization were not brutal, all life would be a perpetual diversion. Work would then be that of the happy craftsmen and would hardly be distinguishable from play. Thought would be a singing of the mind. Havelock Ellis hit upon one of the most apt of all the metaphors for perfect living when he described it as having the rhythmic freedom of the dance. Gaiety is the outward evidence of an inner vitality and freedom. It is a tragic comment on civilization that peace and eagerness are to be found chiefly in the amiable outcasts of society, not among the respectable and admired; among the triflers rather than the profound.

There is a further sense in which the perception of gaiety might be a lesson to the moralists. It was Nietzsche who pleaded powerfully for a joyful wisdom, though he was not the first. Indeed wisdom that has no joy in it may look to its title. For the absence of the latter is a sign that the pretended insight flows from some spiritual failure or feebleness. One may seriously suspect the grave philosopher, and that for two reasons. He is much too serious, and takes his theories much too seriously. It is a fair enough reason why other people should not.

Possibly the most sensible words ever uttered about love and immortality are to be found in the lovely and immortal dialogues of Plato. But it will be recalled that Socrates's glamorous speech about love is delivered to a party of wits slightly befuddled by drink. His grand and convincing fable about immortality is delivered just before the hour of his own execution, even at which terrible moment he finds it proper and possible to jest with his admiring, slightly shocked disciples. It is his jesting that makes the moment turn from terror to beauty. Again in the "Laws" which Plato wrote in his saddening old age, there is much less austerity than in its more youthful predecessor, "The Republic". By the time he was old and disillusioned, Plato knew that there could be no perfect state but that the spirit of play might make it less imperfect.

When a philosopher reaches a certain

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point of wisdom, he knows how tiny his wisdom is. He realizes the quaintness of a mite of intelligence trying to crush the universe into a system invented by his little mind. It is impossible to perceive the ridiculous save where there is a sense of proportion; a sense of humor may not be the most trivial though it is the rarest tool among philosophers. Likewise when the humorist makes the cosmos his theme, his sense of the ridiculous is itself a profoundly philosophical commentary. It is impossible to take the universe too seriously when a satirist lays his finger upon it.

It requires both maturity and good fortune to approach the world habitually with gaiety and exuberance. It requires maturity, because where there is little experience and perspective, any event or any idea is likely to appear monstrously more significant than any event or idea can be in the vast and pointless context of things. The mature have the capacity to be mellow because no passion or illusion any longer forces them to be sharp. But it requires, further, good fortune to be habitually gay or witty. When one is pelted by the blows of necessity, one cannot honestly be debonair.

Yet the gift of gaiety may itself be the greatest good fortune and the most serious step toward maturity. Our point of view has been tainted by the hard tensions of the Protestant tradition. We have been afraid to be happy where happiness was possible, because laughter seemed to have in it the mockery of devils and gaiety the sinfulness of the damned. Our saviors and sages have been depressing; our wits and our warblers have been exiled as foolish and have made up their minds to be as foolish as they could. It is possible, however, to conceive of a wisdom tinctured with lightness and mercurial beauty. Professor Eddington's recent exposition of "The Domain of Physical Science" is a masterly example of how to be at once dancing and profound. There are writers, such as Barrie and Milne at their best, whose gaiety is simply the gentle voice of their sense of the infinite pathos of things. A world peopled by Pollyannas would be ghastly; one inhabited by the grave deacons and moralizing secular saints of the day would be even worse. There is a graceful middle way. One finds it in a few writers. They are those whose wisdom seems to be an intelligence turned glowing and joyful. They seem to have fought their way through (not to have evaded) all the jagged passes of the spirit, and reached a high golden eminence from which they could look down with a tingling serenity. The tingling is their humor; the serenity is their wisdom. They do not see less far, the W. H. Hudsons, the Havelock Ellises, the Shaws, for seeing with merriment or jubilation or wit. They are too serious to be crabbed or puckered or cross. They are the consonant spokesmen of nature. They suggest the primary article of wisdom: to be like nature, in the face of annual death and defeat, to be resurgent always with a gay vitality.

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VOYAGE ACCOMPLI

By

William H. Wright

Drawing by Harvey Peake

YOUR lie was like a shallop, new,
Heedless, and buoyant with surprise.
I saw it launch and brave the blue
Unquiet of your eyes.

Between the shores of You and Me
It dipped and twisted, veered and shied,
So young, so hesitantly free,
And so untried.

And now we watch it where it rides,
Safely moored. And through a spray
Strangely like tears, we mark the tides,
And turn our eyes away.

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JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER

An English View

By J. B. Priestley

LIKE all original novelists, Hergesheimer has created a world of his own, and perhaps the best approach to him is by way of an examination of that world. From the vast welter of reality the artist has disengaged, deliberately in this instance, certain things that, recomposed, fused together by the imagination, have served as material for his bright fables; and once we arrive at some understanding of what he has chosen and what he has ignored and why he should have made such a choice, then we have come very close to the man and his work. This, with Hergesheimer, is not difficult, if only because he happens to be a deliberate, self conscious artist, who not only knows what is happening behind the scenes in his work but is also willing to take us there. His "San Cristobal de la Habana" is something more than a book of travel, a brief and bright glimpse of Havana, it is a visit behind the scenes, a glimpse of the Hergesheimer workshop, sufficiently luxurious and glittering but still, if he will pardon the term, a workshop. Before his narrative has gone more than one third of its way, we find him seated in the Parque Maceo, on the sea wall, brooding over a story, "a story of secret patriotism and the idealism of youth, set in marble salons, at the opera and the cafés". He goes on: "There must be crinoline — would I never escape from that? — and candelabra with glittering prisms; Spanish soldiers in striped linen and officials with green tasseled canes. My youth, he'd come from the United States, would have his little dinners at the Restaurant Français, in Cuba Street number seventy-two and his refrescos at the Café Dominica. In the end he'd leave Havana, having accomplished nothing but the loss of his illusions for the gain of a memory like a dream. . . ." Later we find him looking at shawls, "embroidered with flowers like peonies, four spans across, in a rose that was vermilion, a vermilion that was scarlet, and the calyxes were orange and gamboge, emerald and peacock-blue and yellow". He buys one, the most gorgeous of them all, and the next day it is there in his room, where we can now leave him, his initial conception of his story completed, brooding over his bright shawl.

There, in a few sentences, we have the key to Hergesheimer, to his methods, to the world he creates. On the one hand, the marble salons, the opera, the cafés, crinolines, candelabra, striped linen, green tasseled canes, a blaze of shawls. On the other hand, the secret patriotism, the idealism of youth, the loss of illusions, the gain of a memory like a dream. Bring the two together, making body and soul, and you have the Hergesheimer world, a world of brilliant intriguing surfaces, an opulent feast for the visual sense, but lit from within, touched with life, by the glow of some overmastering romantic impulse, some secret demand of the spirit. Brocade and dream, candelabra and ideal, these are his world. Between these two, the play

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of light and color on the very surface of life and the secret promptings of the spirit at the very heart of it, there is clearly a great deal; there is, indeed, almost the whole of life — business, politics, science, philosophy, religion, the whole tangle of our economic, social, intellectual relationships, the great mass of stuff that supplies most novelists with all their material for fiction. And it would be absurd to say that with all this, what might be called the intellectual body of life, Hergesheimer, not a poet pure and simple but a conscientious narrator, has nothing whatever to do. In his capacity as a novelist, with at least some concern with reality, clearly he could not get on without it.

Nor can it be said that he has even tried to ignore all this vast body of interests. On the contrary, in some of his novels he has made considerable use of some quite definite political and social interests. We have only to think of "The Three Black Pennys", "Java Head", and "Balisand", with their respective industrial, mercantile, and political-social backgrounds, to see that at times he has deliberately turned to account that mass of material lying between the glittering surface and the hidden dream. But he has turned to account only one very small part of it, and then not very successfully. Compare him with the majority of novelists, look at his world and then at theirs, and immediately it is plain how much is missing from him, how he has narrowed his range. That enormous tangle of relationships with which fiction commonly deals is hardly present at all in his work, and then only lightly touched. The continuous minor tragi-comedy of workaday existence has no real place in his fiction. His narratives do not depend upon the clash of character, the stealthy encounter of opposing motives, the comedy that waits upon the interplay of personalities. And such intellectual interests as he makes use of, as part of a setting, do not really enter his world, and for that reason have not the force and significance of the things that do—what we have called the brocade and the dream—and so seem as strangely unreal to us, while we read, as they probably do to him in actual life. He has congratulated himself on the fact that he has been able to produce narratives set in the past without being labeled an historical novelist. This points to a virtue, for it means that his work has been without that layer of dust common to historical novels, has had a beauty and, as it were, urgency not to be found in them. But it also points to a defect, for had he possessed a more apparent historical sense, he would inevitably have come to be thought of as an historical novelist, which even now is not altogether a term of abuse. The fact is, however, that when he gives us an eighteenth century story, we do not see that century and enter into its life, but merely see Joseph Hergesheimer, in a wig and satin breeches, dreaming in an Adam room.

His very passion for luxurious decoration is a trap for him in these settings of the past. He is so anxious to spread the captivating scene before us, so anxious that we should remark this loveliness now faded, that there are times when his people can hardly move for their clothes and furniture and bricabrac and might well grumble that their creator is smothering their drama — which is more important to them than their clothes and furniture — in mere pageantry and turning their world into an antique shop. Nevertheless he must not be confused with those far less considerable writers who, in

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giving us tales of the past, are lavish with highly colored decoration in order to eke out and strengthen thin wobbling stories. Hergesheimer's manner remains the same, whether he is writing of the past or present, of Cuba or a Pennsylvania village. Strictly speaking, it is not decoration at all, not something added but something inseparable from his presentation, a richness of texture in his narrative, an essential quality of the world he creates. We saw how his Cuban story began with an idea of young romance and a vision of a past Havana, its opera and cafés, crinolines and shawls. The narrative is partly conceived in terms of all this glimmering satin and fine gold. Thus there is here something more than mere decoration.

He began as a painter and he still brings to literature a painter's eye, delighted with colors and shapes and textures, the more luxurious the better. At times he can be positively cloying, burying his people under a heap of bright stuffs and dazzling bricabrac. Opening his "Linda Condon" almost at random, we are asked to remark, in two pages, "morocco beauty-cases and powder-boxes", "slipper and garter buckles extravagant in exquisite metals and workings", "limousines with dove-coloured upholstery and crystal vases of maidenhair fern and moss-roses", "black chocolates from painted boxes ruffled in rose silk", "a restaurant of Circassian walnut and velvet carpets", "eggs elaborate with truffles and French pastry". We begin to feel slightly dizzy and sick. In such passages the still life painter and the lover of mere luxury and magnificence join hands, with a somewhat unfortunate result. For the most part, however, the painter in him only directs his attention to the play of light and shadow, the shape and color, bidding him see how "a twilight like blue dust sifted into the shallow fold of the thickly wooded hills", how "the Spanish oaks were hung with patches of wine red, the sumach was brilliant in the darkening undergrowth", how "a pattern of wild geese, flying low and unconcerned above the hills, wavered against the serene, ashen evening". But his passion for these things, though born with the painter, is really a literary one, like that of the earlier Keats. This delight of the eye is an essential part of the world he creates, and the beautiful things in it are not merely so much captivating form and color but so many centres round which there thickly cluster all manner of associations, sentiments, memories; and are too, if you will, symbols, exquisitely embodying an idea.

It is easy to see why he is in danger of being dismissed as "decorative". This appeal to the eye, this richly brocaded texture in his presentation, seems to exist independently of the story, the drama, that is being unfolded. Thus, no matter how great the crisis in his narrative, the murmurous flow of his descriptive prose goes on, poured out like thick cream; the reader is asked to notice this patch of color, that exquisite shape; and there is no attempt, or little attempt, to present the scene as it filters through the agonized minds of the actors in it. The longest story of the three in "Gold and Iron" begins with a description of a young lawyer sitting in his office. He has arrived at a crisis, for he has suddenly realized that so far he has been a failure and that he has no alternative but to begin his life all over again. There he sits in despair:

> He was staring sombrely, with an immobile, thin, dark countenance, at the white plaster wall before him. Close by his right shoulder a window opened on a

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tranquil street, where the vermilion maple buds were splitting; and beyond the window a door was ajar on a plank sidewalk. Some shelves held crumbling yellow calf-bound volumes, a few new, with glazed black labels; at the back was a small cannon stove, with an elbow of pipe let into the plaster; a large steel engraving of Chief Justice Marshall hung on the wall; and in a farther corner a careless pile of paper, folded in dockets or tied with casual string, was collecting a grey film of neglect. A small banjo clock, with a brass-railed pediment, and an elongated picture in colour of the Exchange at Manchester, traced the regular, monotonous passage of minutes into hours.

There is certainly no trace of subjective treatment here. Faced with this cool, determined picture making on the part of the narrator, we find it difficult to realize that the man there is in a mood of utter despair. What are vermilion maple buds and the rest to him? Makes us realize his state of mind, we demand, before worrying us with yellow calf-bound volumes and small banjo clocks and other things in which there is no trace of human misery.

Yet though this practice of heavily brocading his narrative with description runs through all his work, we are not left with any sense of failure in its drama. There is something false in the opening of that story mentioned above, and there we do feel that description and drama are at war with one another, but that is because the story is not typical of its author. We feel that it has not been primarily conceived as a "setting", as most of the others have. There was not present in the initial conception that crinoline-candelabra-bright-shawl element, the brilliant intriguing surface, the visual feast, that we noticed in connection with the Cuban romance and discovered to be an essential part of the world he creates. With him there is no "story" first and then "setting" afterward. The two arrive together, and this richness of texture in the narrative is as much a part of it as the drama, and indeed perhaps more. He has told us that "houses and night and hills were often more vivid to me than the people in or out of them", and he might have added furniture and clothes and curtains and jeweled ornaments, whatever lovingly caught his eye and made him dream, to the list of things more vivid. When we find him, in his solitary travel book, wandering through the streets of Havana that he pictures so artfully, brooding over the bright images before him, beginning to dream, we are at least half way toward his fiction. One step further and the dream is dramatized, around some central mood of the dreamer, himself turned into its chief personage (though still remaining the painter of the scene), a few other figures added, and the story is before us.

He has traveled not only in space for his settings but also in time, in particular to the eighteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth. From all these voyages he has returned rich in spoil, and there has been something like genius in his choice of places and periods: the Massachusetts coast during its great sailing days or rather (and better) at the end of those days, in "Java Head"; the three glimpses, one eighteenth century, one mid-nineteenth, and one present day, of the Pennsylvania iron fields, in "The Three Black Pennys"; the Havana of the Eighties, in "The Bright Shawl"; the late eighteenth century Virginia, in "Balisand". Thus he has succeeded — and it is no small part of his accomplishment, though he does not appear to have been given much credit for it — in exploiting the picturesque possibilities of America, dowering the past life of his own and neighboring states with a romantic charm and a

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glamour excelling those of his fellow authors who still labored at romances of mediæval Florence or Pompadour's France. America has had, of course, an historical-romantic past for her novelists for some time, but now, thanks to Hergesheimer, she has achieved an æsthetic-romantic past in fiction, a notable step forward for her and one that will probably have very important consequences in her literature. There are two motives forever in operation behind the writing of fiction: one is the desire to escape from the life about one, the other is the desire to criticize that life. In some novelists, the desire to escape is easily the predominant motive; in others criticism takes precedence; and in a few there is something like a balance. This æsthetic-romantic past obviously provides the American novelist with an excellent new method of escape, for which purpose Hergesheimer has made use of it. But it also, indirectly and more subtly, provides him with a method, an oblique but effective method, of criticism, for which purpose again Hergesheimer has made use of it.

We have seen already how his world is made up of a rich surface lit from within by the glow of some romantic impulse, some overmastering desire of the spirit. We have seen too how that surface is not merely decorative (though it is that too), is almost independent, in its smooth flow of pictured beauty, of the movement of the drama, and is present in the initial conception of the story, is an intrinsic part of it, as a "setting" in which the narrative is steeped. It represents, modified this way or that by its character, the time and place, an æsthetic vision of the world, and the stories he tells may be described, shortly, as the stories of human beings who tried to realize that vision, to translate it into terms of human life. While the narrator is moving steadily forward, describing beauty, his protagonist is trying, as it were, to live it. All the central figures in these stories (and every story has its central figure who is really the only live creature in it) are ultra romantics, content to hang their world upon a single hair. Their lives are governed not by a complication of interests, a balance of values, but by one interest, one value, alone. They are lonely dreamers, haunted by a vision of strange beauty, for whose sake they would consider the world well lost. Even where they are shown immersed in all manner of affairs, we know that they are nursing some secret desire or some burning remembrance that alone keeps the blood stirring in their veins. They are aristocratic, passionate, ungovernable, poets at heart, as far removed as possible from typical rotarians and good citizens.

We have only to summon his chief personages before our minds again to see how the type persists. We begin with "The Lay Anthony", in which our author has not yet found himself, but whose central figure, blundering adolescent though he may be, has all the glamourous good looks, the secret wonder and ungovernable temper of the type. Gordon Makimmon of "Mountain Blood" stands apart from the rest just as the story itself, a drama of village life in the Virginia mountains, stands apart from the other novels, yet Makimmon, with his indifference to the local pursuits and interests, his sudden black and bitter moods, his debauchery and dreams, is really a kind of poor relation of the others. Then there is the first Howat Penny, with his sullen passionate independence, autocratic temper, and his strange lovely lady from over the sea; there is Jasper Penny upon whose taut, grim, whiskered

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middle age there comes crashing an overmastering passion for a quiet schoolmistress; and there is the last Howat Penny, lonely, exquisite, aristocratic, left with his fading memories of a dead social life, haunted by ghostly operas. There is Gerrit Ammidon, of "Java Head", with his distrust of the complications of life ashore, his passion for his quarterdeck and the open sea, and his Manchu wife, as exotic as a perfumed oriental vase. And, after him, Lee Randon in "Cytherea", outwardly a quiet middle aged family man, but inwardly a dreaming young poet, fascinated by a doll from a confectioner's window and finally swept out to ecstatic and tragic nights in the tropics by a tide of passion. Such nights too are the fate of Charles Gage, in "The Bright Shawl", the young American who goes to Cuba with his mind filled by the vision of heroic youth dying for an ideal; not a tourist in search of health, as he would seem, but a romantic alien deliberately embracing a lost cause. And, last of them, there is Richard Bale of "Balisand", another lonely aristocratic soul, unflinching, autocratic, rigid with fidelity, his whole life illumined by one moment of love. And so we come to the end of this gallery of portraits, in which we may see the same features repeated time after time. It is, indeed, a family portrait gallery.

There is a speech of Bale's, a speech very beautifully cadenced and so more directly moving than most of such things in Hergesheimer (who is apt to be a little monotonous in his rhythms), that is very significant and tells us more than pages of critical comment. He is talking to a visitor who has referred to his tragic love affair, which lasted only two or three days, nine years before: "It's the past I'm lost in, never the present or future; June nine years ago. Nothing has been real since then. It's cold or hot, sunny or there is rain; I'm fox hunting or racing horses or gambling; I go through with it all; and when the horses are running I'm interested; I like the hounds early in the morning; but when the post is reached or the fox holed, it goes out of my mind. As long as I'm active, say concerned with General Washington, it's well enough; but let anything stop for a minute, if I get alone on Diggery in the woods . . . shadows and dream." This is the old ultra romantic temper we know so well, the temper of those who cry to be made immortal with a kiss. One thing only, it may be love, exotic, coming strangely and passionately, or the creation of supreme beauty or the service of some lofty ideal, can save the world from being a weariness and a desolation. One single ray lights up this life. Like Richard Bale, all his men "go through with it all", go fox hunting or attend Congress, build up their iron works, busy themselves with their directorships or their social duties, sign their bills of lading and so on and so forth, but "it goes out of their minds", troubled or enraptured by some secret vision of the world, without which there is no significance in things.

That vision, bringing not merely inspiration but even common value to life, is usually concerned in these novels with love. There are exceptions, of course, the most notable being the Cuban story. But in most of them we discover these lonely dreamers, troubled by the old romantic malaise, who are suddenly touched with ecstasy through the agency of passionate love. And it is love in the very narrowest sense; indeed, it is rather a passionate wonder and desire. There is in it

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little or no companionship, the slow growth of affection, the exquisite chiming of mind with mind, the common care of a certain way of life, of children and friends. It is the first wild rush of ecstasy that matters, the sight of a creature as strange and beautiful as a bright tropical bird or unknown flower, the curious trouble in the heart, the sudden kiss and with it the whole blossoming of life, all its dim runes now blazing with meaning. His women are there simply to bring about such a situation, to arouse such feelings, to be lovely, exotic, disturbing, breathing symbols of the whole æsthetic vision of life. Of one of them, one of the least important, he remarks: "She possessed the indefinable property of charm. Such women, he knew, stirred life—profoundly, reanimating—with extraordinary effort and desires. Their mere passage, the pressure of their fingers, were more imperative than the life-service of others; the flutter of their breath could be more tyrannical than the most poignant memories and vows."

But actually, being there to bring about a certain situation, as a kind of symbol, these women have no real existence in the stories in the sense that their men have; they do not, as it were, exist in their own right. They are creatures molded in a day dream, lovely automata. It is essential that we should really know nothing about them, that their humanity should never be revealed to us, and to the very last we know more about their underclothes than we do about their characters. And this is as it should be, because for the purpose for which they were created their underclothes, their glittering ornaments, the shape and color and texture of their dresses, everything about them that catches the eye and fires the imagination, is more important than their characters. Thus it is that they remain in our memories not as living people but as bright pictures, the brightest in a world made up of bright pictures. The most impressive of them all is the most fantastic, Taou Yuen, that Manchu lady who brought her little painted face, her gorgeous robes, her elaborate ceremonials, among the startled crinolines of old Salem; and what is she but a figure created out of silk and lacquer and porcelain? La Clavel, in "The Bright Shawl", is simply that shawl touched, in a dream, with a fleeting kind of feminine life. Savina Grove is only the doll Cytherea made life size, wound up and set going until it collapses, with a whir of wheels, under the brazen sky of Cuba.

But one story of his, and that not the least important, has not so far been examined. That is "Linda Condon", which is different from the others in several particulars, notably that a woman and not a man is its central figure. It is as if its author had said: You have accused me of filling my novels with beautiful, fantastic dolls; but now I will give you the life story of one of these women you consider doll-like, unreal. Using not a little art, and certainly a good deal of artifice, he produced the story of Linda Condon, with her lovely clear face and exquisite figure, the child of a very light lady, brought up in fashionable hotels, plunged into the most luxurious life of New York, made into a wife and mother, the inspiration for half a lifetime of a great artist, and yet remaining curiously detached, virginal. It is significant that what is most vital in her does not go into her own life, in which there seems to be something missing to the very last, but into her platonic lover's art. Thus she is to be at once a living breathing creature,

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whose history and thoughts and emotions we know, and a symbol, herself the æsthetic vision. But try as he may — and some of the chapters on her childhood and those that describe her fading into middle age are among the best he has written — he never quite succeeds in his purpose: the character is always failing him in one capacity or the other, and we constantly feel the unreality either of the woman herself or of the emotions we are told she excites in those about her. But it remains one of his most ambitious stories, with moments of great beauty in it, and perhaps in no other single novel has he come so near to giving an objective narrative form to his dream of life.

The word "dream" has continually obtruded itself throughout this study, but it has been difficult to keep away from it. There is a curious suggestion in this fiction of an adolescent's day dreaming, very cleverly disguised and decorated in most places but still there as a basis or, perhaps better, a starting point. With a humorous frankness at once rather surprising and very engaging, Hergesheimer, in his "San Cristobal de la Habana", has told us how it was his fate in his early years to be entranced by lovely, dark, haughty girls who never by any chance paid the slightest attention to him, whose mysterious inaccessible beauty had set to work his youthful fancy. He observes: "A marked, not to say sensational, transformation of my own person had been a conspicuous part of that young imaginary business; for, while I was fat and clumsy, I managed to see myself tall and engaging, and dark, too; or anyhow, a figure to beguile a charming girl." And is there not a suggestion of this adolescent day dreaming running through all his fiction? Those tall, handsome, autocratic men of his who suddenly inspire a passion in women as beautiful and exotic as orchids, are they not first cousins to that transformed self of those dreams? For all their apparently elaborate objectivity, it is not difficult to see most of these romances as projections of such dreams, which have not, of course, themselves persisted in his life but have served to give his art, or at least the earlier phase of it which would now seem to be at an end, its scope, direction, force. Their influence will explain why in most of his novels, the central figure, really the dreamer himself, has a substance and reality that make the other figures by comparison seem mere shadows, and why the interest is rarely diffused among the several personages of the story.

From this point many avenues may be seen branching in all directions, but it is not possible to explore them now. Otherwise it would be interesting to examine, in the light of what has already been discovered here, what we might call the time element in Hergesheimer's novels. He is one of those writers (and perhaps Thackeray is the best example of them) who are able, without any apparent effort, to present growth and decay, the ebb and flow of time, itself a dimension, as it were, of the narrative; who do not, as so many lesser writers do, present a static scene and when they wish to show the changes of time jerk the whole thing forward in a most irritating and unconvincing fashion. Hardly anywhere in modern fiction will you find the ebbing out of time, the slow changes and fading of life, so cunningly suggested as they are in "The Three Black Pennys", "Linda Condon", and "Balisand". It would be interesting too to return to the two motives of escape and criticism (or revolt) and to see how Hergesheimer, apparently all in-

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tent upon the first, has also provided the second with not a little scope, so that while he might appear to be one of the few detached artists among a horde of shouting rebels, actually his own little revolt, indirect, oblique though it may be, is one of the most effective. There is as much damaging criticism of the "hundred per cent American" tradition implied in these highly colored romances as there is in any of the so called novels of revolt. Nor would it be difficult to show that deliberate reaction against that tradition is responsible for much of the weakness of Hergesheimer's attitude, its narrowness and deliberate overemphasis of certain aspects of life. But with the adequacy and value of the romantic-æsthetic philosophy of life we are fortunately not concerned here, though we are at liberty to point out that there are signs that Hergesheimer, whose "Balisand" is less successful than one or two of the earlier novels only because it tries to do much more, is now broadening the basis of that philosophy. This means that in the future he is less likely to be in danger of periodical collapse, always the danger of humorless æsthetes, of suddenly appearing to us not as a conscientious and very considerable literary artist but as a fatuous little man solemnly fussing about gilt clocks and shimmering underclothes. And even so far he has the satisfaction of knowing that he is one of the handful of modern novelists who have widened the scope of the art of fiction, for while he has given his narratives a purely objective, solidly rounded appearance, leaving them as vivid in the memory as a real experience, he has also made his fiction as subjective in essence as a lyric. He has been equally successful with both the brocade and the dream, leaving the one shining in our hands while the other goes filtering through our minds, our imagination being thus doubly captured for a while by his vision of life.

AND WHO WOULD NOT ENVY ME?

By John V. A. Weaver

WHEN I went loveless,
Sweet was my song
Sung to efface the tears
That all night long
Salted my bitten lips.
Oh, aching, empty years!

One came, who gave her love
Fair in my hands.
Waking or sleeping,
Peace at my shoulder stands.
Fled are my daytime songs, —
Fled with the nights of weeping.

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THE MOVING PICTURE MOVES

By Carl Hovey

HABIT sunk its grooves into motion picture making at the start. Whatever the first studio bosses thought of doing in order to put their stuff across became a tradition and was the way to do it.

These early overlords put into pictures chases, fire scenes, the broken dam, the doll heroine with curls of corkscrew shavings, Little Eva titles, the and-so-the-centuries-rolled-around-until sort of title, apple blossom time, the scene where the girl in a torn evening dress is seen tacking through the pelting rain at night to escape from a sensual beast, glycerine tears, grand dukes, the Royal Mounted, crystal chandeliers, five gallon hats, furniture smashing fights, and any number of other coin compelling gags most of which were taken from the old stage melodramas. Although "Blue Jeans" and "The Lights of London" would be recognized as laughable even by audiences south of Fourteenth Street, the same hokum still succeeds on the screen and makes what is lightly called a barrel of money for the producers every day.

This is one side of the story, and there are numbers of persons otherwise bright who think that is all there is to moving pictures — canned goods for the canaille.

Quixotic would be he who should step forward to plead for the cool blooded czars of the picture industry and go so far as to say that Samuel Goldwyn, Joe Schenck, Jesse Lasky, Louis B. Mayer, Carl Laemmle, William Fox, and all four of the Warner brothers are artists instead of business men. Nevertheless, it is perfectly true that there is something on the loose in Hollywood besides press agents and box office returns, that among the vast human armies which these men hold in bonds of discipline and pay, the art complex is raging like the plague. Anyone who doesn't know this, or hasn't caught the evidences on the screen, is getting behind the times.

Under the inverted bowl of incomparable blue which is the Hollywood sky there rises the continuous plaint of directors, assistant directors, continuity writers, camera men, specialists of all sorts, asking for new twists, new angles, a new sincerity of presentation, the fresh eye for seeing and doing it. Hatred of the hackneyed, contempt for the dub, are stridently and scathingly expressed. However much routine men are in the saddle and in perpetual favor, as they are everywhere in every human activity the world over, there is still the aggressive enthusiasm of the eager to be reckoned with. And they are making more than a dent.

During the past few months so many sharply interesting pictures have been released that no one can have seen them all. Here are some of them:

The Big Parade
The Dark Angel
Three Faces East
Mare Nostrum
The Grand Duchess and the Waiter
The Sea Beast
Kiss Me Again
Lady Windermere's Fan
The Black Pirate

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Stella Dallas
The Unholy Three
Her Sister from Paris
The Merry Widow
Pretty Ladies
The Road to Yesterday
The Tower of Lies
Sally, Irene and Mary
The King on Main Street
A Kiss for Cinderella
La Bohème
The Gold Rush
His Secretary
The Pony Express
Classified
Ben-Hur
The Wanderer

Obviously these pictures fit into no group, since they are of all sorts, as different as Dreiser and Anita Loos, both of whom, however, people read and talk about. But these pictures have one thing in common — from the powerful naturalness of "The Big Parade" to the merely picturesque smartness of "His Secretary" or "Classified", from the conventional heartbreak of "Stella Dallas" to the spicy if undisturbing drama of "Lady Windermere's Fan", they have qualities which demonstrate both the beautiful expressiveness and range of the screen and the way it is assuming its place among the arts.

Picture production has not been reduced to a business formula, in spite of logic, of necessity almost. On the contrary, the reason why so many pictures fail and lose money for the producers is that the producers are trying to make them too good. They take chances on screen ideas to which the response of the paying public is a matter of tragic doubt. And if it costs ten thousand dollars to gamble on the success of a play on the speaking stage, it takes one hundred, two hundred, three hundred thousand for a picture, while the big specials, as everyone knows, may run into millions. The risk is so great that commercial logic would seem to point inexorably toward standardization of the product.

This would be easy, because motion picture audiences are everywhere practically the same. Whether you preview a picture (the trying out process) in Glendale, California, or Flushing, Long Island, in Hollywood, Yonkers, or Hackensack, the audience always laughs at some situations and fails to laugh at others, is held by certain moments of drama and is restless and indifferent to others, enjoys some titles and is cold to others. Outside of a few New York houses, perhaps, and regions where a local obsession is rampant, picture audiences react to the same things in the same way.

Twenty millions ready to laugh or cry as one! It wouldn't take much of a statistician to tabulate results and draw up the perfect formula for the hundred per cent, audience proof, money making, silver shadowgraph of the screen. But no one has done it. Instead, the motion picture people have directed their energies toward securing finer effects, a more direct and clean cut representation of the story in hand, and better stories themselves. Cameras are made to work wonders, the art of composition as the painter understands it has been perfected, acting for the screen has been made to go ahead while acting on the stage is going backward, and the matter of the play itself — well, that's the next thing to be attended to.

For screen stories are still the weakest element in picture production. The reason for this state of things is that a knowledge of what you can do and can't do on the screen, the ability to do what you set out to do — in other words, picture technique — is as necessary as water to a fish. Without technique there would be no pictures; therefore the industry is filled with people who have it. With few exceptions they are not gifted with the ability to

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tell a story. That is why a very large proportion of the pictures shown on the screen every day are as flat dramatically as a child's picture puzzle: scene follows scene, sequence trails after sequence, without any real suspense or tension of interest; the warm magic of illusion on which everything depends is just not there.

The fact that pictures do succeed without good stories is due to the tremendous eye-feeding and solar-plexus-stirring possibilities of the camera and the projection machine. Present a beautiful woman magnified before the eyes of the audience into a gargantuan houri; a Vilma Banky, Pola Negri, Norma Shearer, Corinne Griffith, or Mae Murray hovering like a substantial wraith of loveliness very close; or a Colman or Valentino; or Reginald Denny in a fist fight, Jack Barrymore kissing Dolores Costello, a ship foundering in a typhoon, a whale swallowing a man, Carol Dempster guided by Griffith through a midwestern cyclone twister — and these thrills are enough to content the audience without regard to the finer qualities of story.

Up to this time the screen has hardly produced the type of man of which there are several in the theatre, the David Belasco or George M. Cohan or Winchell Smith who is able to analyze and understand what he is doing and whose expertness of judgment can be depended upon to avoid blundering with the audience. Hollywood has produced Harry Rapf and Irving Thalberg, however, two supervisors of production who have something besides picture technique. Both are associated with Metro-Goldwyn, the company responsible for at least three first rank pictures of the season — "The Merry Widow", "Ben-Hur", "The Big Parade".

The Stallings picture has a convincing story, goes off the track nowhere in a dramatic sense, and has everything else besides. No wonder it is the only motion picture extant which all agree to admire. Von Stroheim's "The Merry Widow" is an unexpectedly rich romance, "Ben-Hur" is an extraordinarily successful historical picture; but neither these two nor any others have penetrated below the skin of the public or deserved to do so as "The Big Parade" has done. People say that "The Big Parade" appeals because of its war material, forgetting how sincerely, naturally, humanly, that material is handled. It is absurd to suppose that the public is not equally willing to be aroused by a hundred other subjects — the vigorous and fresh handling is what matters.

There is no picture, in my opinion, to touch "The Big Parade" because no other lives in the same vital way. After it, the picturegoer has the task of choosing among the big productions, only parts of which will score with him, or else of coming to smaller things that are perfect in their way. The big pictures have their moments; some of the others maintain an unbroken charm and effectiveness from the first title to the last fadeout. Two of Lubitsch's, "Kiss Me Again" and "Lady Windermere's Fan", undoubtedly cast the spell. Mal St. Clair and Monta Bell are also directors who have the style and skill to carry a glass for one hour and ten minutes without breaking it. "Style" is probably an unusual word to apply to the telling of a story on the screen, but I believe it is most useful. How else are you going to describe the manner in which the director is to deliver his drama without once departing from the tone which he has taken, the key he has adopted, the pace which he has set? Cecil B. DeMille's "The Road to Yesterday" is as much an ex-

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ample of style as a romance of Maurice Hewlett — which, in feeling, is what the story of the play resembles. Not even the most genuinely thrilling train wreck on the screen — a head on collision between two night expresses, seen from the *inside* — breaks the smooth and flowing form in which the picture is cast. "The Tower of Lies", in places a powerful picture, is an example of bad, uneven style. The opening scenes of peasant life are in terms as rugged and simple as anything in "The Big Parade". But instead of maintaining that atmosphere the director got off into a forced melodrama of clichés. Of the big pictures, "La Bohème" is one which creates and maintains its own atmosphere consistently to the end. But, outside of Lillian Gish's acting, it does not rise to greatness.

Miss Gish's power as a tear compeller is disputed by some. I thought her performance in "La Bohème" touchingly full of the urge that contracts the heart with sadness and pity. She was forlorn, she was lovely, she was heroic, she was only a girl. In no other of the present big pictures is there anything to match her. Belle Bennett's acting of the deserted wife and mother in "Stella Dallas" is as creditable to Belle Bennett, but the difference in the material is like to that between gold and brass. I mean that, however far fetched the story of "La Bohème" may actually be, we have learned to accept it as true romance, whereas the forced situation of "Stella Dallas" is all out of drawing with life and always will be. Nevertheless, Henry King, taking his materials as he found them, built so well with his direction that "Stella Dallas" is a remarkably effective picture.

If I must choose between "Stella Dallas", which has a mediocre story but tells it, and "The Black Pirate", which is decidedly stronger as an exhibition of technicolor and the personality of Douglas Fairbanks than as a screen play; or between "The Dark Angel", "The Sea Beast", "The Pony Express", or "The Wanderer" (each of which has a developed story quality) and pictures like "Mare Nostrum" and "The Gold Rush", where the story is sacrificed in favor of seascapes, submarines, the personality of Chaplin, the tilting gag and the like, I say — give me the ones that have the shape and semblance of a play.

Perhaps "play" isn't the word; in fact, screen writers usually refer to their scripts as "stories", which is not satisfactory either. The dependence of the screen upon novels and stage plays for its material is deplored, but is there anything to be done about it — and why? Without a doubt story writers who produce directly for the screen and for the screen only will come more prominently into existence some day; men with screen technique will write the stories (as they often do now, even though most of them have more technique than story gift); or possibly it will be found unnecessary to burden a prospective screen writer with more than the rudiments of technique so long as he works with an assistant who knows it all. But, aside from this, I have yet to see a screen production — not excepting "The Last Laugh" — which was not also a short story, novel, or play if you wanted to turn it about.

Without seeking to torture the moving picture out of its resemblance to the art of the novel or of the theatre — I believe they are of one family — it seems both wise and timely to rise and remark that things are being done on the screen which the play fans and bookworms (who are often so exclusive in their tastes) should not miss.

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SIDELIGHTS ON NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS

By Annie Russell Marble

"YOU never miss the water till the well runs dry" is an oldtime adage that has many modern applications. It has been recalled this year by the decision of the Nobel Institutes not to award any of the customary annual prizes for achievements in science, literature, and the promotion of peace. (The belated award in physics to Professor Manna Siegbahn of the University of Upsala, although given this autumn, was a prize for 1924, not for the current year.) For twenty four successive years Nobel prizes in several of these fields have been announced in November and awarded on December tenth, the day commemorative of the death of Alfred Bernhard Nobel. The announcements have been awaited with speculative curiosity; they have been received with varied degrees of censure.

In public response, by word and international press, there has been in past years only an occasional note of appreciation either of the adjudicators or of the donor who left the bulk of his fortune of nine millions as a legacy, to be divided among aspiring workers in chemistry, physics, physiology or medicine, literature, and the promotion of world peace — provided the work of outstanding merit had tended "to benefit mankind". Gratitude has been seldom expressed; criticism has flowed freely. The apparent demand this year for the "customary awards" was an insinuation that the Nobel prize money was ours, to be given to our chosen candidates. Dr. Johnson's words recur to memory, "Gratitude is a fruit of great cultivation; you do not find it among gross people." This year of abstinence from prize giving might be a time for cultivation of that "grace of gratitude" for the more than fourscore awards that have stimulated and rewarded scientific discoveries, literature of "an idealistic tendency", and movements toward world peace.

Many conflicting and disparaging statements have been made about the joint decision of the Nobel Foundation to omit all awards this year. According to the tenets of the will of Alfred Nobel — and the Code of Statutes which was framed in 1900 to interpret and expound the terms of this will — it is decreed that "each of the annual prizes founded by the said will shall be awarded at least once during each ensuing five-year period" (ensuing, that is, after the first prizes were given in 1901). In Section 5 of this same Code one reads: "If it be deemed that not one of the works under examination attains to the standard of excellence above referred to, the sum allotted for the prize or prizes shall be withheld until the ensuing year."

The first announcement, which was assumed to be official, stated that "the prizes this year would be withheld because of lack of suitable candidates". The outcry was loud and immediate from many sources. The literary journals, in tones of autocracy, asked, "How could there be a lack of 'suitable candidates' when such writers of today as Herr Mann of Germany, Thomas

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Hardy of England, Concha Espina of Spain, Sigrid Undset of Norway — not to mention other candidates proposed by academies and universities — were recognized by international critics as superior?" When the hubbub of racial tongues became less insistent, the real reason for the decision was allowed to percolate from the Nobel Institutes to the aggressive public of many lands. The primal cause of the condition, it appeared, was economic: the resources of the Nobel Foundation had been reduced by years of awards, fluctuating incomes during the war period, and progressive taxation. If no time should be allowed for cumulative interest, the original sum of about $40,000 for each recipient must be reduced to an embarrassing degree. With foresight for such possible crises, the Code had provided that "the award in each section shall under no consideration be less than sixty per cent of that portion of the annual interest that shall be available for the award, nor shall the amount be apportioned to more than a maximum of three prizes".

As a temporary sop to the peevish public that clamors for satisfaction, it has been predicted that in 1926, the twenty fifth anniversary of the first awards, there may be double or divided prizes among different nationalities, with special celebrations. In 1904, the prize in literature was divided between Echegaray of Spain and Mistral of Provence, and in 1909, two noted inventors of wireless telegraphy, Marconi and Braun, shared the money award in physics.

There have been occasional differences of opinion about the prior claims of scientists; but the task of choosing these winners is simple compared with that of finding the writer who shall satisfy the majority of critics. As in other fields whose harvest is rewarded by the Nobel will, the author shall have produced a work "to benefit mankind". What is the criterion of literature that will answer that demand? Will it not fluctuate with racial standards and individual interpretations? There is little difficulty in obtaining a consensus of approval for such awards in science and medicine as these already made; to Koch, for discoveries about thyroid glands; to Roentgen, for X-rays; to Marie Curie, for discovery and development of radium and polonium; to Sir William Ramsay, for knowledge about gaseous elements; and to the three Americans — chemist, physicist, and physician — Theodore W. Richards, A. A. Michelson, and Alexis Carrel. Few would quarrel with the decisions which favored Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Elihu Root for "the peace prize" for specific influences that tended "to benefit mankind".

When we turn to literature, the divergence of opinion on this qualification is wide. It is even more pronounced regarding the second condition of award: that the prize be given to the writer "who shall have produced the most distinguished work of an idealistic tendency". Both phrases have diverse interpretations, according to individual ideas of what is strictly humanitarian and what is idealistic. Will there ever be accord of opinion about the justice of awards — given these conditions — to Paul Heyse, Karl Gjellerup, Carl Spitteler, Jacinto Benavente? On the one hand, plaudits greeted the honors to Carducci, Kipling, Eucken, Rolland, Tagore, Heidenstam, Anatole France, and Yeats; on the other hand, some of these writers are demoted by certain modernists among critics to the rank of "third rate", imitative producers. Time alone will decide whether books that were especially selected as worthy

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Drawing by Margaret Freeman

Sigrid Undset

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of the prize, like "Jean-Christophe", "Growth of the Soil", and "The Peasants", have had lasting or passing influence upon literature "of an idealistic tendency".

To the credit of the adjudicators be it remembered that the Nobel Institute of the Swedish Academy has created a committee of specialists to confer with the "eighteen immortals" of the Academy who make the final decision. "It is not essential to be a Swedish subject or to be a member of the Corporation that has to make the awards", are the words explanatory of this committee of expert advisers. In 1923 the Nobel Committee specialists were Per Hallström, in German and English literature; Karl August Hagberg, in Italian and Spanish literature; Sven Erik Söderman, in French literature; and Anton Karlgren, in Slavic literature. Looking over the lists of winners in each department, a fair minded reader will be impressed by the absolute lack of favoritism toward Scandinavian scientists or writers — their quota is small. Thus has been fulfilled one of the conditions stressed by the donor of the legacy, that "no consideration of nationality shall prevail". "Why were Ibsen and Strindberg passed by, and Björnson and Selma Lagerlöf chosen for honors?" asks a malcontent who emphasizes, duly, the creative vigor of the realistic dramatists. An amateur opinion would be that Björnson more truly exemplified the humanistic and idealistic qualities. Rumor says that Strindberg was earnestly recommended by certain members of the Swedish Academy but that his own condemnation was found in "The Confession of a Fool" and in his emotional vehemence toward his first wife. "And Tolstoy?" asks another, who complains that "he was consistently ignored for nine years" after the first awards were made. Authoritative answer, given to the writer of this article, was that the prize was offered to Tolstoy but that he refused it, since he persistently denied to himself all honors and emoluments.

Twenty four names on the roster of fame from 1901 to 1924 in literature, and among them one woman only, Selma Lagerlöf! Such a ratio would not seem unfair in science: Madame Curie is distinctively *the* woman chemist to be honored on that list. And Baroness Bertha von Suttner, by personal activities and her book, "Lay Down Your Arms", deserved the "peace prize" in earlier years. More recently, many Americans have nominated Jane Addams as possible recipient of this honor conferred by the Norwegian Storthing.

In modern literature, however, the large proportion of women among eminent writers is recognized everywhere. In some countries the number of women on the lists of literary achievements equals that of men. Selma Lagerlöf, the one woman who captured the Nobel Prize in literature — seventeen years ago — has had no rival. An amusing journalistic mistake had wide credence in recent weeks — namely a syndicated photograph of Miss Lagerlöf, with the caption, "Winner of Nobel Prize in Literature". Confusion and conflict have resulted in many "middle brow minds" and inquiries have come by mail and in print. One persistent correspondent declared: "Selma Lagerlöf might have received the prize a *second* time, mightn't she? Was there any statement in the will to prevent this?" The assertion that no prize in literature was given this year was only partially convincing to this disputant.

Selma Lageröf waited for the prize for three or four years after her strong

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admirers of many nationalities had stormed the ears and the mail of the Swedish Academicians in her behalf. Rumor persists that Rudolf Eucken, philosopher of idealistic Christianity, was "the dark horse" of 1908 upon whom those who favored Miss Lagerlöf, and those who counseled delay, made their compromise. The reward came to her soon, however, with the approval of readers in many countries, especially in England and America, who knew her earlier books in excellent translations, "The Story of Gösta Berling", "Miracles of Antichrist", and "The Wonderful Adventures of Nils". In the seventeen years since her honor, Miss Lagerlöf has expanded both her gifts and her fame. She is always racial in background of setting and ideas but broadly humanistic in her sympathies, with unquestioned "idealistic tendency" in motive and message. She is busy with her writing and welfare activities. One of her latest novels is now being translated into English by her faithful interpreter, Mrs. Velma Swanston Howard. Several of her stories are shown as films and an opera, adapted from "Gösta Berling's Saga", has recently been given in Milan, with libretto by Rissatto and music by Richard Zandonai.

That Miss Lagerlöf has had no companions among her sex is not due to lack of candidates urged by respective academies, universities, and "learned societies" — candidates must be nominated by such organizations, not by individual boosters. English critics in the press have frequently suggested May Sinclair, sometimes Dorothy Richardson, more recently Sheila Kaye-Smith; Americans have urged Ellen Glasgow, Edith Wharton, and Willa Cather. Critics of Continental fiction have stressed the vigor and dramatic skill of Concha Espina, author of novels translated as "Mariflor", "The Red Beacon", and others. She belongs to the aristocracy of Spain and has written both verse and prose. Since the death of Countess Pardo-Bazan she has held first rank among Spanish women in literature, and she has been given three awards by the Spanish Academy within the last ten years.

Preeminent among the names heralded by the guessers of the winner for 1925 was that of Sigrid Undset of Norway. She has written what has been fittingly called "an epic of womanhood", entitled in Norwegian "Kristin Lavransdatter". Two parts of this vital tale of Norway of the fourteenth century have been translated into English as "The Bridal Wreath" and "The Mistress of Husaby". Colorful and poetic in its background, it deals with elemental passions and feelings, with tense conflicts between daughter and father, wife and husband. The author, daughter of a noted archæologist, has been a student and a teacher of history, and as writer she is singularly able to make the past live.

A few months ago it was reported: "There is a feeling in Sweden that the recipients in recent years have treated the honor of the Nobel prizes a little too nonchalantly and that, if they wish to receive their prize, they ought to conform with the rules of the Nobel Institute and appear in person to deliver the lecture which is a stipulated condition" (American-Scandinavian Review, February, 1925). The delivery of a lecture is in the form of a strong suggestion rather than "a stipulated condition", the words reading: "It shall be incumbent upon a prize winner, whenever feasible, to give a lecture on the subject treated of in the work to which the prize has been

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awarded, such lecture to take place within six months of the Founder's Day at which the prize was won, and to be given at Stockholm or, in the case of the Peace prize, at Christiania." Reymont was unable to go to Stockholm in 1924 because of the ill health that culminated in his death within a few months. And the other recipient of that year, Professor Einthoven of Leyden, winner of the prize in medicine, was starting upon a voyage to the United States with plans for a course of lectures here.

Other winners in literature within recent years, including Anatole France and William Butler Yeats, have received the honor in person from the King of Sweden. J. Lewis May in his biography of Anatole France relates "the Master's impressions" on this occasion, when he made a daring comment upon the Treaty of Versailles as a futile peace, which caused unpleasant reactions in France and elsewhere. He found Sweden "a charming country" and added, "No city ever pleases me more than Stockholm." In emphasis of the international value of the Nobel Prize he said, "I am grateful to a jury whose reputation for impartiality is held in such high esteem."

William Butler Yeats, as poet-painter in words, recorded his memories of the days at Stockholm as "A Meditation" (Dial, September, 1924). He delighted in the royal splendor and simplicity combined, in the music, and in the fluent speech of the President of the Swedish Academy. In his official address, on "The Irish Theatre", he paid deep tribute to the cooperation of Synge and Lady Gregory. To this "Meditation" Mr. Yeats gave the title, "The Bounty of Sweden". May it not be a fitting phrase to keep in mind, in appreciation of the high ideals and generosity of Alfred Nobel and the faithful services, for a quarter century, of his trustees, the King of Sweden and the directors of the Nobel Institutes?

CHROMO TONES

By Cathal Canty

I SHALL not know another day
As wildly bright as this.
I shall know all you are too soon
And I shall miss

The swift delight in catching each
New sally of your wit,
For once repeated, I shall have
No smile for it.

And yet how gaily I would rush
This vivid hour away
To trace with you the monotone
Of days grown grey.

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BIGGER AND BETTER MURDERS

By Stephen Vincent Benét

WHENEVER the body of Herman Overcoat, the prominent millionaire, is discovered in the hermetically sealed chamber with a mysterious eggbeater through its œsophagus, or a single shot rings out above the merriment of the English house party and Lady Diana Milkshake turns light mauve as the butler announces with horror in his tones that something strange must 'ave 'appened to the Master, life begins to take on a livelier and brighter tinge for most of us. Even literary critics are perfectly willing to put the latest Siamese masterpiece back in the refrigerator for a while until the mystery of who secreted the star sapphires in the old family retainer has been satisfactorily solved.

It was not always thus. The novel itself, in the days before the subconscious became a conversational weapon, was considered a rather trivial and timewasting form of diversion, and the detective story has been the Little Polly Flinders of the novel family. But now times have changed, and the same little boys who were thoroughly spanked for reading Nick Carter behind the barn openly consume detective story magazines before the innocent eyes of their children and flock to buy the latest J. S. Fletcher the moment it comes from the press. All that remains is for Gilbert Seldes to discover the detective story as an eighteenth lively art and for Otto Kahn to offer a prize of ten thousand dollars for a jazz opera based upon the exploits of Old and Young King Brady. "Bigger and Better Murders" is the cry of the moment, and those of us who have sedulously followed the trail of the Rajah's Rubies for years with a certain feeling of bashfulness blush, if possible, to find that we have really been behaving quite intelligently all the time.

There is a certain bond between confirmed detective storyites stronger than any transient ties of race, religion, or family. It unites bank president and bootblack, playwright and pulley salesman, conservative and radical. As in the case of the more baneful drugs, the confirmed addict can recognize a fellow addict almost at a glance — and when, out of a large and noisy party, two highly incompatible people sit for hours engrossed in quiet talk, oblivious of the revelry, it is quite probable that they are by no means discussing what you think they are but merely swapping conclusions as to whether Mrs. Rinehart's "The Red Lamp" has quite the same fine frenzy as "The Man in Lower Ten" or — eternal question — whether Holmes will ever return to Baker Street.

For the detective story, during the last generation or so, has changed from a literary sideline, somewhat apologetically regarded by its followers, and assumed the proportions of a genuine industry. There is not only a body of the reading public which reads detective stories constantly — there is a considerable body which seems to read nothing else. The largest bookstore in New York City

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finds it profitable to devote a prominent show table, year in, year out, exclusively to detective literature; city libraries deem it necessary to card index all books dealing with sleuthful doings under a separate head; one can think, offhand, of a score of authors who make a very good living writing nothing but detective stories. And as for the magazines!

As an addict, I myself have sampled no less than four — two weeklies and two monthlies — entirely devoted to the cult of fictional crime. I have seen half a dozen others on the newsstands. And of magazines printing occasional detective stories, the name is legion. Moreover, I know of few publications which create such extraordinary loyalty among such widely different classes of readers.

The letters from readers in the pages just before the advertising tell the story. True, one fancies that the writers of some of the missives find great difficulty in writing five consecutive sentences, but they must all be able to read, for they discuss the characters and exploits of their favorite Hawkshaws and Raffleses with a devastating candor generally reserved for one's small town neighbors, and a refreshing belief in the reality of these characters that fairly makes one want to dress up as Santa Claus. One is constantly coming across, such sentences as, "I have read every issue of your splendid publication for the last ten years. When I started I was the only one in town — now all my friends read it too. I used to read other magazines — now yours is the only one."

This state of affairs may suggest to you a public entirely composed of readers who should have taken the Montessori method up to the age of thirty five. It is not so. The late President Wilson, for instance, joined with Amy Lowell — and the janitor of my present apartment — in an admiration for "The Middle Temple Murder". One of the most distinguished actresses on the American stage has read her set of Sherlock Holmes until it requires successive rebindings. So have I, and so has the thirteen year old son of the groceryman at the corner. Bankers, bootleggers, bushelmen, beauty specialists — from capitalists to cooks the tale runs and the host is gathered. And the odd fact is that the heterogeneous audience thus collected have one curious thing in common — a thing remarkable in this day and age — a sincerity of taste.

Literary fads and fashions pass — the detective story is a constant. You can pretend to like Proust or Aldous Huxley, but I defy you to pretend to like Edgar Wallace or Isabel Ostrander — you either read them with avidity or you do not read them at all. A judicious smattering of reviewers' catch phrases may befool the ill instructed into thinking you have read "The Peasants", but you cannot fob off someone who has just finished "The Scarlet Scar" with pretty generalities anent the beauties of its depiction of nature. That is one of the refreshing things about the detective story — it does not make for conversational bunk. And, as far as detective stories are concerned, that pest of the world, the lackadaisical reader, does not exist.

What has made this devoted, reckonable, and apparently growing public for the detective story? A dozen factors, probably — I shall try to touch upon only two or three. The first is Sherlock Holmes. There were good detective stories before Holmes, there have been good detective stories after him — but it seems only just to say that no single character so com-

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pletely dominates a subsection of literature. I revere Dupin and admire Lecoq — Nick Carter, Rouletabille, Randolph Mason, Lord Peter Wimsey, Max Carrados, Inspector Furneaux, have their several places in my affection — but Holmes is the master, after all, and the assiduous attempts of various other detective story writers to make their sleuths as unlike Holmes as possible have only succeeded, in general, in making them rather more like him than ever, except in the region of the intelligence. Of course there are exceptions — Father Brown is one — but then almost any character of Mr. Chesterton's should be an exception to practically any rule.

Perhaps one should offer President Wilson as a second factor in the growing popularity of the detective story. Holmes interested in detective stories people who had never been interested in detective stories before. The plaid cap and the Turkish slipper full of tobacco were translated into every known language, until aliens who placed Westminster Abbey in the crypt of the Tower of London could find their way to Baker Street blindfold. Holmes universalized the detective story, but when President Wilson openly admitted a penchant for the mysteries of J. S. Fletcher, he furnished, once and for all, the complete reply to the marital remark, "Why are you wasting your time reading that silly detective story?" It was a greater triumph than the Treaty of Versailles. Since then, so many bank presidents have come out into the open about their favorite form of fiction that one wonders when they ever get time to do any banking.

But there seems to be a more underlying cause than Holmes's plaid cap or Wilson's gallant gesture — a cause which affects all English and American literature as a whole. Fools rush in to generalize about a question where angels, quite justifiably, fear to be misquoted — but it must seem to many readers as if the best of the fiction produced in the last twenty five years has marked, in general, a turning toward character and away from plot. The novel, on the one hand, has become a vehicle for the expression of almost any sort of social propaganda or theory, and on the other, an implement for probing the psychological recesses of the mind. In other words, the most widely acclaimed of our novelists seem more interested in contemplation and analysis than in action — more fascinated by what men think or feel than by what they actually do. Or, if violent physical action remains, its importance is carefully minimized — we are as interested in a lifted eyebrow as in a looted ruby, our duels are fought with tense little words, not rapiers. Hamlet does not kill his uncle, he merely cuts him; and why should Macbeth murder Duncan when he can attain his end in a great many more pages by breaking down his libido with incessant conversation?

Moreover, with this decline in the importance of plot, per se, many of the old stock properties of the novel — the midnight murder, the missing will, the child stolen by gipsies, etcetera — have either fallen out of employment entirely, or into the hands of journeymen who cannot employ them convincingly. As for the old school villain, even such a villain as Macbeth, between tolerance and psychoanalysis he has practically ceased to exist. Who is the villain in "The Old Wives' Tale"? Time, perhaps, that defaces all things, but nothing more concrete. The villain in "The Forsyte Saga" is the sense of property — true, Soames Forsyte may have started to be a villain, but he has

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ended by becoming in many ways the most sympathetic character in "The White Monkey". The villain of "The Peasants" is nature, if you wish to stretch the point; of "Tono Bungay", modern civilization and the scheme of society — and so it goes. I am not suggesting a return to the days of Desperate Desmond. I am merely offering the suggestion that the average reader sometimes has a certain appetite for plot, physical excitement, and definite villainy not entirely satisfied by the best of the modern novels and that, in the detective story, he finds all these things in full measure.

In the first place, the good detective story is plot. There can be character — Holmes, again, is indubitably a great character; but a critic who started to analyze Holmes as he might analyze Soames Forsyte would find himself at an end before he began. Besides, we do not wish to analyze Holmes — we wish to admire him. We do not wish to know what he thinks, except as it aids him to catch the villain. And the villain must be properly villainous, the chase exciting. As for graces of style, if they are present we are grateful for them so long as they do not get in the way of the narrative; but that is all. It is one of Mr. Chesterton's triumphs that he has adapted a style considerably superior to that of, say, William Garrett, to the uses of the detective story. It is one of Mrs. Rinehart's triumphs that she can characterize the various personages in "The Red Lamp" as deftly as she does and still keep the pace of her tale. Of such combinations are the best detective stories made — but in the average detective story an ingenious complication will carry a deal of crude writing as long as the narrative thread is direct and clear.

In addition, because of the very limits of his craft, the average detective story author of ordinary abilities must enforcedly avoid certain hazards which lie in wait for the greatest. Elaborate descriptions of nature, tenuous states of thought, involved psychological processes, love scenes (except of the briefest and most conventional description), are not for him. Ingenuity, adroitness, deception, the ability to tell an exciting, straightforward tale — these are his tools. Additional gifts are grace notes which may make a great detective story writer out of a good one — but the lack of them will not lose the good one his audience.

So we come to the vexed question of the masters of the detective story. Poe, Wilkie Collins, Conan Doyle, Gaboriau — these, I suppose, would be admitted unanimously to any Valhalla of fictional crime. Dickens deserves a unique place for the black labyrinth of "The Mystery of Edwin Drood", which, in spite of the many plausible solutions put forward by various claimants, still remains as baffling as ever. Anna Katharine Green, of a certainty, should have most honorable mention for long and notable service in the gory field, especially for "The Filigree Ball" and "The Leavenworth Case" — though my own nominee for premier honors beside Conan Doyle would be G. K. Chesterton. Father Brown is one of the few modern detectives who never remind one of Holmes, and there is at least one moment in his adventures quite as good as the discovery of the footprints of the hound in "The Hound of the Baskervilles".

Among women writers, Mrs. Rinehart is easily first. "The Circular Staircase", published years ago, still remains a model of ingenuity, and the business of the sheep in "The Red Lamp" can hardly be improved upon for striking the note of authentic

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horror. Lerouge for "The Perfume of the Lady in Black" and "The Mystery of the Yellow Room"; Cleveland Moffett for "Through the Wall" (an extraordinary feat!); Melville Davisson Post for the Randolph Mason series and "The Sleuth of St. James' Square" (though Randolph Mason is a little off the main current of detective fiction); R. Austin Freeman for "The Singing Bone" at least, though Thorndyke can be longwinded; A. A. Milne for "The Red House Mystery" (a freak exhibit — strictly speaking, the detective story should not be sullied with humor, but "The Red House Mystery" is unique); Dorothy Sayers for "Whose Body?" (another successful mingling of banter and crime); Edgar Wallace, especially for "The Green Archer" and "The Gallows Hand"; Ernest Bramah, perhaps, though Max Carrados errs a little, sometimes, on the side of style; Jacques Futrelle for at least a sample of the ways of the Thinking Machine — one could add a dozen more citations for distinguished service and still not be at an end. E. Phillips Oppenheim is always dependable for a well dressed, dinner jacket crime or two. J. S. Fletcher occupies a position all his own: one of the most fecund of mystery writers, he is apt to become a little stodgy at times, but there is a delightful flavor of muffins and fog about his heavy handed inspectors. For Arthur B. Reeve's Craig Kennedy, in spite of his enormous popularity, I have never been able to acquire the slightest affection, and Cleek of the Forty Faces leaves me cold — but Hulbert Footner, Isabel Ostrander, and William Garrett deserve more than passing mention. So does J. Jefferson Farjeon, a newcomer in the field, though the exceedingly adroit beginning of "Uninvited Guests" does not carry through to an equally adroit conclusion. Among writers who have not yet attained wide popularity in book form, one might mention Austin J. Small, A. E. Apple, and Mansfield Scott. Mr. Apple, it is true, writes rather of criminals than detectives — and that brings us to Raffles and Arsene Lupin and Fu-Manchu and the rest of the great rogues.

I cannot discuss them here — they belong in a neighboring province. But the reader who may be interested in seeing how an unholily Gallic mind may translate another man's character to suit his own purposes should certainly peruse "Arsene Lupin contre Holmlock Shears". I cannot quite forgive Monsieur Leblanc for his disrespectful treatment of my beloved Holmes, but his dealings with Dr. Watson in Paris are superb.

In closing may I make one plea to detective story writers in general? The days of uncertainty and dubiety for the industry are over — the detective story is as firmly established in our national consciousness as toothpaste, B. V. D.'s, and the Spirit of Rotary. More power to its typewriters — but may a single and most devoted follower of literary criminalities present an avowedly personal list of pet abhorrences too often present in his favorite literary pabulum? Some of them have done yeoman service in the first distracted days of the art, others have crept in through laxness or inadvertence, defiling the rigorous simplicity of the detective story with an alien taint. Such a list of unnecessary excrescences would include, for my part:

Terrifying sights, sounds, or events which prove to have nothing to do with the real mystery. (This is cheating. You must fool the reader legitimately, or not at all.)

Idol's eyes, removed from Hindu

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temples and sought after by conventions of dark complexioned gentlemen who grin at window panes. (Yes, I know "The Moonstone". "The Moonstone" is a classic. But dilutions of it are like diluted Scotch — neither good Scotch nor good water.)

Mysterious poisons unknown to Western science. (Too easy. The modern pharmacopœia presents an extraordinarily good assortment of known poisons — it is sheer laziness on the part of the author to invent unknown ones.)

Over-unwieldy mechanical devices for the commission or detection of crime. (In a recent detective story, otherwise excellent, one was forced to believe that the corpse in question had spent at least four years and vast sums of money building a room for no other conceivable purpose except to be elaborately murdered therein. This is overstressing the admitted feeble-mindedness of most murderees.)

Too many secret passages, stairways and closets. (One or two are permissible if carefully planted and sparingly employed — but, again, some of the 'millionaire's mansions in recent detective stories must have been built from the ground plan of the Roman catacombs.)

Love interest, unless sternly held in check. (I am aware that Sherlock Holmes became sentimentally entangled — in the dramatic version. But it was a desecration nevertheless. Dr. Watson fell in love and married — Dr. Watsons can. But there are better things for real detectives to do.)

Doubtless others could add to such a list, but I feel I have said enough. And I am not really too particular even about those I have noted. I will read about idol's eyes, and even love-sick detectives, if a suitable murder is there to liven things up. For, when all is said and done, murder is the backbone of the detective story. Kidnaping, stolen jewels, arson, piracy, mayhem — they are all very well in their way, but there is something about a good satisfactory murder that makes them seem trifling. For preference an English murder (though again, I am not particular). There is a certain thrilling quality about the two words "Scotland Yard" which one does not quite find even in Spring 3100. But there, any murder will do, though I am getting a little tired of Long Island ones. Two murders are often better than one, if properly spaced and timed — or one murder and the omnipresent threat of others — but I shall not be captious and demand a series of crimes. One adequate, workmanlike murder, behind locked doors or not, and I shall be well content for 300 pages. Call in whom you like, now Holmes is out of practice — I have plugged up the doorbell and disconnected the telephone. The waterpipes can freeze, the bill collectors knock at the door unavailingly. Lord Eustace Pendragon, the well known butterfly hunter has just been assassinated in his rooms on Adelphi Terrace under circumstances of peculiar atrocity and I do not intend to move from my chair until I find out who left the three yellow diamonds in the goldfish bowl and what is the meaning of the mysterious inscription tattooed on the severed right ear contained in a scented blue envelope on the dressing table.

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THE SUN IN SPLENDOUR

By Thomas Burke

PART VI

The instalments of Mr. Burke's atmospheric novel which have been appearing in THE BOOKMAN *have necessarily been greatly shortened to meet space requirements; but it has been the attempt of the editors to retain as much as is possible of the quality of this unusual and distinctive piece of highly organized prose.*

ON a bilious morning of December Mrs. Greenspan's loft sent out the whir of a sewing machine and the quaver of a voice. She was "finishing" a set of dress waistcoats. She and the machine were at one end of the table; the cloth and the plates of the last meal had been pushed to the farther end. One hand turned the wheel of the machine, the other guided the material. The head was bent to the task, and the voice was detached and impersonal.

O-o-o-oh!
The bells of hell go ting-a-ling-a-ling
For you but not for me;
The bells of heaven they ring-a-ling-a-ling
For souls from sin set free.
O Death where is thy sting-a-ling-a-ling
Where grave thy victoree?
The bells of hell go —

"Oh, drat this light! How can one work on a day like this?"

The one window of the loft sent across the gloom a narrow shaft of primrose, leaving on either side of it two arches of shadow. To the brown smell of stables was added the blue smell of fog. The few soft noises that reached it from the outer world reached it as through enfoldings of blankets; the faint hoot of motor horns, the stifled cry of a street hawker; no news of stir or business, no news of the immediate world of London. The loft was isolated from sight and sound, and Mrs. Greenspan might have been finishing waistcoats on another dimension. Without the song and the machine, the stillness would have hurt the ear and disturbed the soul; but she was familiar with loneliness and silence, and could draw from them sweeter solace than others draw from company. Her dark hued imagination lived in them. When the church ladies remarked on the wonder of her living so happily in this lonely corner, without getting downcast or demoralized, she said: "Ah, but miss — there's always Connie, y'know." And when they remarked on the wonder of her keeping the place so clean and keeping the child so respectable, and bringing her up so nicely behaved, she said, "Ah, miss — it's a pride with me. I take a pride in it", and she looked at her secret lamp and her mind strayed to the taper with which she lit it. "I expect she's a great help to you, though, Mrs. Greenspan", they would say; and she would answer with honest enthusiasm, "Oh, miss, I don't know what I should do without her. Reelly I don't."

But just now she was doing without her. There was no Connie in the loft and no Connie to come home from school. No Connie to get the meals

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and sweep up the floor and put the place in order and carry the "work" home and bring "work" back. She was in the dark but she could still put her hand upon her secret lamp. She had placed it at a distance, for safety. Somebody had called at the loft; somebody in a big overcoat and a big bowler hat; somebody who shadowed Gossip and Interference; somebody adumbrated from "The Sun in Splendour". The Somebody had demanded the production of Connie, and the Somebody had looked round the loft, and the Somebody had asked Connie whether she loved her Auntie, and the Somebody had stood still, saying nothing, but looking at Connie and looking at Auntie. And the Somebody had gone away saying, "All right!"

That visit had made her fearful. Behind the bluff figure of that Somebody she saw a horde of horrid creatures who were going to take her lamp away and extinguish from life the little light that made it endurable. Those "Sun in Splendour" people, and her nephew, Negretti; low people; publicans and criminals; not fit to have the charge of a child.

Yet interfering with her and Connie. Why? She was bringing her up as a child should be brought up — strictly; and, because she had never confessed it to herself, she was certain that they could not have guessed what pleasure she had in the strict upbringing. It was just impertinent interference. They'd taken a fancy to Connie and wanted her for themselves. That's what it was. And what for? Aha!

So, after that visit of the big overcoat, she had contrived to lose Connie. They could come as often as they liked now. If they wanted Connie, let 'em find her. Let 'em turn the loft upside down. Let 'em watch the loft day and night. Connie wasn't there; and if any more was said about it, she would throw at them the what-for suggestion. Why did those people — public house people — want to get a girl of thirteen away from her aunt — eh? That'd be a nasty one to answer. Aha!

She went on with her work and her song.

O-o-oh!
I am Jesus' little lamb,
Yes, oh, yes, I am, I am,
He will wash me white as snow,
Some little job for —

The fog had obscured the sound of steps mounting the ladder, and she heard only the thud on the door. She looked round the loft, swept the dirty plates under the table, and gave her person a pat here and a twitch there. You never knew who might be coming — the old cats from the church, quite likely. She opened the door to Arthur Negretti. She stared for a moment; then said, "Oh — think of the devil!" and went back to the table. He came in and looked about the fog smeared room. "Just looked in t'know if you'd care to come round and see the old man. You always amuse him."

"Oh! Invited out — eh? Long time since I been invited out. Hope there's no catch in it. As poor Jack used to say — bless his heart — opportunity knocks once at every man's door and usually waits outside for him with a hammer."

"Well, you always amuse him. And he's a bit off color just now. Fact is, he's got the wind up a bit. Went up to Clerkenwell Sessions yesterday. Told him not to. Would go, though. Handing out real large helpings of Time, they were. Place fairly buzzed with it. Pal of his was sent up. Eighteen months. Sheer carelessness. Doing quite well — then slipped on the orange peel. Eighteen months."

"Oh, Artie! Oh, dear!" She

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wagged her long head at him. "No wonder he's got the wind up. Who wouldn't? Sit down while I finish this waistcoat. 'Tain't wind, though. It's conscience. You two and your wicked ways. The way of the transgressor is the wages of sin. *I'm* always telling you that. Mark me, Artie. Mark me. Both him and you'll be there 'fore long. You'll come to a bad end, my boy. You'll be —" Through the buzzing of the machine her voice came cranking.

"Quite likely. Near quite a lot of bad ends in France and Mespot. Can't think of many that'd be worse. But I wasn't warned about 'em. They threw 'em at me."

"Ah, but that's different. That's war. This is — this is — this is wrongdoing before the Lord. I know you'll have a bad end."

"All ends are bad, ole girl. Only a difference in style. I've read the book and seen the pictures."

"Ah, you laugh now. But as poor Jack used to say — it's the last straw that gives the camel the hump. Perhaps you'll remember my words later."

"Perhaps I shall. And get a last laugh out of 'em. Well, what about coming along about two?"

"Dessay I could, though better a dish of herbs with the righteous than a stalled ox with — What you got for dinner?"

"Dunno. What'd you like? I'll be calling back there in time for the old woman to order it."

"Like, eh? That wants a bit o' thinking. . . ." She spun the handle of the machine and put her nose to it. "What I'd like, eh?"

Negretti went to the fireplace and kicked the coals into a blaze. Turning about, he asked suddenly: "Where's Connie?"

"Connie? Eh? Oh, school, of course. Where d'you think she'd be this time o' day?"

"Oh, I just asked."

"Here — pick up that bit o' lining. . . . Thanks. . . . What'd I like for dinner, eh? Reelly, I don't quite know. Some days I fancy one thing, some days, another. Yesterday, y'know, I had quite a fancy for liver and bacon. It was just that sort o' day. But things being so hard, y'know . . ." She waved a waistcoat at him. "*You* don't look as though you had to think of liver and bacon and give it up because times was hard. You and your brown boots and your fancy waistcoat and your motor car. But what I have I have honest. I eat me bread with clean hands and a pure heart. Liver and bacon. . . But steak pudden's very good this time o' year. 'Myes. Or there's stewed steak and carrots. Gimme that other waistcoat — on that chair, there. Or there's — I remember at a house I worked at just after poor dear Jack died — they lived well there, upstairs and downstairs — I remember one day we had veal cutlets and macaroni. My! Never had 'em since but never forgotten 'em. Jugged hare was another. *That's* good! I could do with a bit now. And shepherd's pie — I can get on with that when it's properly done. Though that's ordinary. Fried chicken's another thing I can always get on with. Oo! You ought to a-seen poor Jack with chicken. We hadn't got much money, then, but we did see life. He ate so much chicken, that man, I wonder he didn't crow when he was shouting the odds. . . . Or there's roast pork and apple sauce. . . . Reelly, I don't know. I'm torn between two stools, dearie. But after all, what's nicer than a roast shoulder, well done — eh?"

She looked up from her work and caught Negretti's quiet grin.

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"Mind you, I'm not a big eater, but I like everything that's good."

"So I've noticed. And a lot of it."

"That tongue of yours ought to be tinned. Now then, that job's done. Three more and I'm finished. Not much money in this work. All in the hands of the Jews. Not that I dislike Jews. After all, Jesus Christ was a Jew. And I wish to Christ I was, too. Be running me own shops, then."

"What about Connie's dinner?"

"There's plenty in the cupboard for her."

"Oh? Times ain't quite so bad, then?"

"As bad as they can be. But we gotter live, ain't we? Nobody can't ever say I stinted the child."

"No, you certainly stuff her all right. But she wants something more'n food. She ain't a dog."

"What more than she gets here?"

"Something you can't give her."

"Eh? Lord knows I give her enough. Get yer silly head out o' the light."

"Yes. Know what you give her well enough."

"Oh, do yer? Well, who's bringing her up — me or you?"

"We'll see soon. . . . Well, I gotta get along. You take your own time and be over about two."

"I'll be there, dearie. Two, or a bit after. As poor Jack used to say, punctuality's the thief of time when only one of you's punctual. And tell 'em . . ." she raised her voice as Arthur stepped out, "tell 'em to get onion sauce with the shoulder! Plenty of onion sauce. See?"

He was sailing slimly down the yard before the last words were out, but the roast shoulder was on the Hoxton table at half past two with a basin of onion sauce and three vegetables, and a jug of cold water; and Mrs. Greenspan was there, making eyes at it and coquetting with her nose. The smell spread from the dim and disordered living room through the house, and she breathed the heavy limp air as though it were ozone. To the true atmosphere of the house she was insensible — an atmosphere of cloud and commination.

The three stood round the table — the long black female creature, the alert and easy youth, and the bowed white figure of his father; and their mutual attitude was gritty. Peter Negretti was in appearance as venerable as his son was slick. His head was large and was made larger by the shock of white hair which swept back from the brow. Gold rimmed spectacles gave his eyes benevolence, and but for a little twist about the mouth which, like his son's restlessness, betrayed his character, he could have passed for a musician. He had, indeed, the physical appearance of a broken down Verdi, and the air of a man who had dreamed and, because his dreams had not come true, had broken them in pieces. Between him and his son were constant warfare and constant partnership. Their only demonstrations were dull flares of difference and a joint dislike of the old woman who kept house for them.

As they stood by the table, talking perfunctorily, Arthur moved uneasily, as though he were waiting impatiently to keep an appointment. Wherever he was, he had always the air of being in a hurry to go somewhere else. Even on Sundays, when he had no affairs, he was always looking at the clock; and, in any company, he looked always from side to side as though awaiting another arrival. Even over a cup of coffee with his father at bedtime — which might last from half past eleven until two — he gave the impression that he was keeping Bed waiting.

They sat to the table, and the elder

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Negretti carved, and then seemed to fade out of the company. Arthur served vegetables, and, when all were served, he put the vegetable dishes in the fender of the fireplace, which was of the kitchen range type. The joint, too, was put there. Busy with the mutton, her firm, lean jaws working in six-eight time, Mrs. Greenspan forgot her rectitude — she was often forgetting it — and asked Peter, cheerily, "Well, how's my Christian friend, and how's the old what-d'ye-call-it going?"

"What? The — er — thingummy?"

"Ah."

"Oh. Mustn't grumble." The tone was not large and full, and she noticed it.

"Don't seem very pleased about it. But there — seeing what it is —" She looked round the table and into the fender. "Still, you seem to bear up pretty well. Just a bit more of the fat, Artie. . . . Thanks. My! You two must hate your stomachs — the way you live. Wish I could keep a table like this. But where's it all come from — eh? Eating the bread of deceit. I wonder every mouthful don't choke me."

Arthur grinned at her. "It will, too, if you take mouthfuls like the last."

She dug her fork at him. "You will have your joke, dearie. Just like poor Jack. But he could afford to laugh. He could laugh prop'ly, not like the crackling of thorns under a pot. What I mean — he had a clear conscience. . . . Just push those baked potatoes this way, boy." She looked up from her plate and again rallied the old man. "Well, dad, you're not saying much."

"Eh?" He came back with a jerk. "No?"

"No."

"What's the good of talking when you got nothing to say?"

"Well, who ever has anything to say? If we waited till then we'd all be dumb. Bright and chatty — that's my idea. Don't like your mopey ones. Can't trust 'em. Always moping, you two. Why can't you be a bit cheery and tell a funny story — eh? Conscience, I suppose?"

She ate and ate, and Arthur refilled her plate, solemnly, and filled it again. She ate with hands and arms and face and head. She ate with passion and devotion. She did homage to Gluttony. Her whole being was a hymn to it.

"What's this? Plum-pudden' and custard? Well, I don't know. Almost feel as though I'd had enough. But I dessay I could manage a bit. That mutton was real good."

She took a large slab of the pudding, and thrust her fork at it. She was the one happy creature of the three. She had found her gods and they had accepted her — the bloated god of food and the grey god whom she worshiped over the body of Connie. She had no yearnings beyond them. Of the searching and wandering of Arthur's soul she knew nothing. Of the thwarted desires and dreams of old Peter she knew nothing. They had adventured and had lost their way, while seeing from afar the places where they would be. Old Negretti saw a quiet villa in a quiet street and a bit of garden and respectability. Arthur saw a place in a world expressed by the books in the front room: a world of keen, efficient minds working keenly and efficiently in common endeavor: a world where he might exchange ideas with Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell and Wells. But he would have done that clumsily, and he could steal automobiles neatly. And in a world of respectability old Negretti would have been vulgar.

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Mrs. Greenspan had got from life what she wanted and was handling it well. They were doing well what they didn't want to do, until they had reached the point of — "Oh, well, what's it matter? It's all we're fit for" — the phrase by which seven and three quarter millions of London's eight millions excuse and condone their straying from the path of Beauty, and the fading of the stars by which they tried to travel.

"What's this? Cheese? Well, really. . . . But I think I'll have just a morsel. I don't often come out."

At four o'clock she was certain that she could eat no more. She announced — and her voice had the tone of a proclamation — that she had Done Very Nicely. Old Negretti looked at her, and at the table and the dishes, and at his son. A movement of his mouth expressed what words would not carry. Arthur covered the flash of the message with: "Well, come into the front room, ole girl. We'll get a cup of tea and I'll play you a tune." He pushed her into the tiny passage and made a backward movement with his hand toward his father.

The parlor was the usual mousetrap which London builders design for the social occasions of the workingman, and it expressed the atmosphere of the house. When they turned in the room they knocked against something; and when they made a mental turn they knocked against each other. With four pieces of furniture and two people it was a straitjacket. These parlors are possibly conceived in a mood of education; if a man cannot move without damaging his own furniture, he will probably learn not to move from his bench in his employer's factory. He will learn to accept restraint. But he doesn't. He learns to clear out of the enfolding walls and take refuge in the wider radius and the freer air of the tavern. Negretti's parlor was crowded with piano, one armchair, one piano stool, one ordinary chair, a corner bracket, and a bamboo fern stand.

Mrs. Greenspan stalked into it, saw the armchair, and settled herself in it with a *"G-rrmph!"* She inspected the room and said, "Very nice. Wonder when it last saw the flick of a duster. Still, I ain't going to pass remarks. Forty winks is what I could do with. Don't you mind me. I'm going to be a lady today."

Negretti went to the piano. The music stand held an open copy of Francis, Day and Hunter's Dance Annual. He flipped the leaves over; sat down; thrust his head forward, and played a fox trot with the slick phrasing that had made him so popular in army singsongs. On the final *tum-TUM*, Mrs. Greenspan woke up.

"H'm. What's that?"

"Singapore, My Singapore."

"H'm. Even if it was good I wouldn't like it. D'you know that nice old song: 'The Hours I Spent with Thee'?"

"Fancy I know it."

"Well, don't play it. I can have me forty winks quite well without it. When I think what money that piano was bought with —"

Tea was brought in thick cups. She gulped it, and asked for another.

Negretti tossed the Dance Annual aside, and quietly and slowly swung round on the stool.

"By the way, while we're alone. Question I want to ask you."

"Fire away, dearie."

"Where's Connie?"

"Eh?"

"Where's Connie?"

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"What you mean — 'where's Connie?'"

"Speak plain, don't I? Want to know where she is."

"Far's I know she's in school. Waking me up just when I was settled down."

"You know what I mean. What you done with her?"

"Done with her?"

"Don't muck about, now." He got up and took the two steps between the piano and the fireplace. He stood over her, clean, alert and strong. Only his uneasy eyes, and his constant play with a cigarette, denied his title to the essential goodness. "I want to know what you've done with Connie. She isn't with you. She isn't going to the school she used to go to. Nobody's seen her for three or four weeks. Where is she?"

Mrs. Greenspan was startled then, but she gave no sudden sign of it. She looked up from her chair with a sleepy grin. "If you know so much, me lord, you ought to know where she is. And I could do with another cup. Bit stronger, too, if you don't mind."

"I found out that she'd gone."

"Oh? Reelly? Well, then, you can find out where she's gone *to*." She said this with a cocksure flirt. Negretti had given her the opening to say it, and he capped it:

"She *has* gone, then?"

"I didn't say she had." She sat up straight, holding cup in one hand and saucer in the other. "Don't you be so smart, me lad."

"You said quite enough. Where's she gone? Save a lot of trouble for both of us if you say. I can find out — only it means trouble."

"Then you can just have the trouble. Do you good to do a bit of work."

"Better stop being funny, ole girl. Better say right out where Connie is."

"Oh? I'd better. . . . You're a nice one to tell me what I'd better do. What's the game, eh? All you crowd after Connie. You and them — them public house people. Trying to get her away from me. Nice lot you are. You got something up your sleeve. I'm responsible for her, and I'm going to see she don't get into bad hands. See?"

"Bad hands?" He looked down at her long hands and his mouth twisted. "I'd make it my job to get any kid out of those two hands. God knows what those two hands've done to her the last few years. . . . Now then, where is she?"

The door opened and old Negretti sidled in. He moved across to his son, and stood by him. She began to see that forces were moving against her; that the dinner had been a bait. She could have stopped all questions at the loft by pushing Arthur out; but here she was on foreign ground, and not fully at ease. Old Negretti seconded the question with, "Yes, where's my sister's girl?"

"Well . . . I might say, and I mightn't. If you ask decently I might tell you. But be bullied — no. You ain't in no position to bully me. Other way about, if you don't mind my speaking plain. Well, if you want to know, she's run away. And where she is I know no more'n you."

"You never told anybody she'd run away."

"I was keeping it quiet, like. Didn't want no scandal or no —"

"No questions, eh?" Negretti had the air of prosecuting counsel. "Don't suppose you did want any questions. Bit awkward for you, eh? Run away, has she? Just the sort of kid to do it, too. Try another one, ole girl."

"What? Eh? What you mean?"

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"Try something a bit nearer."

"I just tole you she's run away."

"I know. Have another shot. That kid run away? Why, after five years of you she ain't got the pluck of a mouse. Too much under your nose, *and* your hands, for that. She couldn't do it. Where is she?"

"Well, dearie, you're mighty smart. So I don't mind telling you that she ain't with me. So it's no good asking me any more questions."

"What've you done with her?" The tone was patient, as though he were willing to ask the question for the rest of the day.

"A-ah! that'd be telling!"

"I see. Planted her somewhere?"

"An' if I have, eh? If I have?" She became shrill. "What then? What's it to do wi' you? Eh? She's in my care, ain't she? Who's brought her up — me or you?"

"Who's thrashed the life out of her? That's a question some people'll be asking soon. Understand me?"

She looked at him through close eyelids.

"Who's Some People?"

"People who'll want a straight answer to a straight question."

"Oh, will they? Well, good luck to 'em." The tone was flippant, but there was acid in it; and the next words were vicious. "Them Scollards! That's it! Them 'Sun in Splendour' people. Some dirty work o' theirs. Trying to get hold of a schoolgirl. What for? Eh? Some dirty game they're up to. Who's going to worry with other people's kids — unless they got some reason for it. *I* know. I know what they're after. And you put 'em up to it, I s'pose. 'Cos you ain't got the pluck to do the dirty work yerself."

Negretti's face twitched, but he did not move. He said, quietly: "Don't say that again, ole woman. Don't say it again", and something in his tone and manner gave her a feeling of chill. She left that side of the matter and returned with, "Some People asking questions, eh? Some People'll be asking questions about you soon. See! If you don't leave me alone. I'm fairly easygoing, but — Understand? What is it you got against me — that's what I'd like to know? Pity you and them Scollards ain't got something better to do. Both of you doing dirty work — and then throw stones at me. Taking Connie out o' my hands and into a public house to listen to music. And then you listen to her tales I s'pose." She came up from the chair, a thin black line. She put her cup on the table with a crack. "The little whiner! She'd be as bad as you and them lot if I didn't keep a firm hand on her. That's why I put her away — out o' your reach. See? Try to find her if you like, but I tell *you* when you do find her, you'll find something you won't like. See? You'll put yer hand in for a prize packet, and you'll get it bit. See?"

She ended on a high note, clear enough, but a little uncertain of itself. She was arraigned, and she did not know just how strong or how weak her accusers were. She was faced by a group of detestable people who were bent on hurting her. Interfering without any cause, just because they liked interfering. Connie was her property and meant beauty and delight to her. She was certain — and the world would have confirmed her certainty — that she was bringing Connie up decently. Discipline was necessary for children, and was recommended by all authority. Authority took children out of criminal homes — like the Negrettis' — and put them in Homes, where discipline was regularly exer-

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cised. She felt that she was doing her duty, and it only happened that duty was an intense pleasure. And now — now, in face of their threats, she saw long grey days stretching before her. She saw hours of bliss fading into level dailiness. She saw a hollow loft which once had been filled with stimulating nights. What had she done to them that they should be down on her like this? Making all this fuss. It wasn't Connie they were thinking of; they were only trying to upset *her* because she spoke her mind about their wicked business. Without clear sight of the case, she felt that they had some secret knowledge, and that the fight was hopeless; but they were trying to steal her treasure, and the passion of the miser made her fight.

"And look here — if you do get hold of her, and dare to take her away, I'll bluepaper you."

"All right. I'm going to find her anyway. So get busy."

"It's unlawful. She's in my charge."

"I'll chance it. You won't do yourself no good going into court. Everybody'll know then what games you been playing with the kid. *I* know. All your nonsense about bringing her up strict. Think I haven't seen through it? Think I don't know the dirt you got in you? The devil that's biting you? I rumbled it long ago."

She stood quite still, looking through the window into the dim street whose petty clamor came to them in jets, and gave no sign that she had even heard the words. She stood for some seconds; and then said: "Well — you was saying about the court. Seems to me you couldn't show your face in a court."

"Couldn't I? Do you more harm than me. You'll spill all the beans if it comes into court. The whole story'll be out, then, and there'll be an end to presents from the church women."

"Oh — and what about you? You won't do all the talking, me lad. I can do a bit, too. About your games."

"Perhaps you could, ole girl. But you got to prove it. And that wouldn't be easy. Don't think I've left much proof lying about."

"And so've you got to prove it, yeh little snide-merchant."

She was white now. Negretti was airy. "Quite. And we've got the proofs."

"Got — got the proofs?"

"Ur. The kid's body. Mrs. Scollard's seen her and the Scollard's doctor's seen her. And there's people round the yard who've heard things at night. I'm fond of young Connie, and I ain't going to stand by and see the kid suffer any longer. Got that?"

She looked at him, and she looked at his father, who sat on the piano stool with head bowed and fingers twisting. To neither had she ever felt ill will; their private crimes against society were their own affair, as her dealings with Connie were hers; and she would have done nothing to interfere with them. Her attitude to them and to the rest of the world, was the benevolence of the cynic, grateful to the world for giving her something to laugh at. She had no spites and no jealousies; the many strange things that centred on Connie had their wellspring far deeper than the springs of human resentments. But now, they had discovered her devil, the little secret friend that she hid from the open places of her heart; and she was no longer the grinning cynic. She was an outraged creature, baffled and dismayed. These brutes, who had no gleam of their own to follow, had broken into her stronghold.

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Seeking for tremendous words with which to confuse and scatter them, and wondering just how much she should say or how little, she came out at last with a loud, "Bah! Both of yer. Bah!" Then, pulling herself together, and patting her wispy hair, she added, "And look out. I ain't such a fool as I look. Perhaps I can't prove anything on you, but I might be able to do something just as good. See? *Damn you!* . . . You make trouble for me, I'll make trouble for you. I can make lots of trouble all round. You and them Scollards. Nice ones, they are. Turned their eldest boy out o' the house into the streets, they have, just 'cos he wouldn't do what they wanted."

"He ran away."

"Don't you tell me. Dare to call me cruel after that! If that ain't cruelty I'd like to know what is. The dirty dogs! Why, I — I — I've gone short meself rather'n Connie should go short. I sit up nights working for her." She was at once furious at their interference and pained by their injustice. "I'd do anything for the girl. I think more of her than of anything else. I love that child. I *love* her." The tone held a sickly truth. "I'd — I'd starve rather'n turn her out. I — I —"

She realized that she was making a speech, and stopped short. "Now, before I go and make trouble, you going to stop interfering with me, or not?"

"Not."

"All right. Then you start looking for her right away. And if you do find her, then look out for yesselves. That plain enough?"

"Quite."

"All right, then. You and your *Quite!*" A touch of her daily spirit came back to her voice. "Well, thanks for the roast shoulder, and for giving me warning. Good hunting! And I hope it keeps fine for you! Now I'll be off!"

From Harman Street the lean black figure came into Brick Lane, but instead of turning north toward home, it plodded through the Lane into Osborn Street, and across Whitechapel to Goodman's Fields and the Tenters.

Through shoals of mist and pools of silence she went, a plodding fantom, and as she came into Osborn Street her nose was caught by the odor of coffee, carried from a stall at the corner. At the moment of her passing, a figure moved into its glow, came suddenly to life as a young man, and faded again into nothing. Something in the outline of the figure seemed familiar to her, but her mind was upon other things, and her memory dropped it. Her mind was wandering among the walls of lighted windows, which it dressed with legends of the curious and the terrible, and, using the windows as a mirror of itself, it gave her profane images that brought a shiver and a chuckle.

Nursing these images, she crossed the shining length of Whitechapel Road, and came through Little Alie Street to the Tenters. A discreet and accommodating friend of hers lived here; a crony of the old days, and somewhat of her own style; and by an arrangement of a shilling or two or something in a bottle Connie was in the care of this friend. The smart Negrettis would never think of looking for her here; nobody knew that her aunt had friends in this quarter. With pleasant anticipations she knocked at the door of a tiny cottage at the end of a dusky lane which caught but faintly the long drone of the life around it. There came a mutter of urgent feet along the passage; the door was slowly opened; a small thin face

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peered out. There was a second of silence. Then: "Oh! it's you." A rush of whispering, an entrance, and a closed door.

For the next five minutes Mrs. Greenspan was engaged with the thin harassed face of Mrs. Lurus, which stared whitely through an effusion of words and worry and gesture. Penetrating this cloud at last, she came to one clear fact. She had at first told Negretti that Connie had run away. She had thought then that she was telling a lie, but she had told the truth.

". . . and went out 'smorning for half an hour, and when I come back — well, there! You could 'a knocked me down", said Mrs. Lurus. "Gone!" said Mrs. Lurus. "Not a sign of her nowhere, and nobody see her. That was 'smorning, and not a sign of her since. I didn't dares do anything, 'cos I didn't quite know, y'see. Couldn't make no inquiries, like. I was going to send over to you if she didn't come back tonight. She may come back, o' course, but . . . 'F you arst me, she's gone for fair. Bin very mopish the last day or two. All shut up, like, 's if she'd got something in her head. She can't git far, though. A kid like that. What you going to do about it, dear?"

Mrs. Greenspan had no idea what she was going to do about it, but she tightened her lean lips, and nodded. "You leave it to me, dearie. Don't you say a word to anybody. I'll soon have her back. Jest you say nothing. Don't let on at all. And don't worry yesself. I'll soon get her."

But she didn't.

For three years her evenings were empty and life was barren. Not for three years did she see Connie again, and by then Connie was beyond the fear of her hands or the menace of her eyes.

She plodded home in dull rage against the world at large and immediately against those who by their interference had forced her to lose sight of Connie. Had she known that she would never find her, her rage might have turned to acute sickness; but her walk was eased by hopes of getting her back and by an encounter in de Beauvoir Town. As she was going through Canal Road she saw, under a lamp in a lonely corner, the wandering youth who had passed across the light of the coffee stall. He was talking earnestly to a companion, who stood negligently upright, flicking ash from his cigarette. The attitude, without the lamplight on his profile, betrayed Arthur Negretti and she stood waiting on the opposite side until the youth whose figure had seemed familiar should come into the light. She just wanted to know who he was; any information about Arthur might be useful. After five minutes amid the melancholy that arises like mist from the disconsolate squares and terraces of de Beauvoir Town, she murmured a soft, "Oh!" She had one more keen look; then made a quick turn, and plodded more briskly. As she plodded she thought: "Oh! that's it, is it? Arthur's got hold of him, eh? The nice respectable Master Scollard's going with Arthur. Think they're better'n other people, and come interfering with me about Her while their own kid's mixing with Arthur and his gang. All right, Mister Splendid Scollard. You and your music. And your beautiful Eric mixing with that lot. I'll teach 'em to interfere with me. Not that I want to do anybody any harm. But why can't they leave me alone? Connie and me got on all right together. . . . I'll do something to 'em. I'll do something somehow."

(To be continued.)

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LIFE THROUGH FICTION

By Charles A. Bennett

IV: THE KNIGHT'S MOVE

Most plays or novels worth the name do more than tell a story, portray a character: they reflect an attitude toward life, a philosophy on the part of the author. Moreover, since they present individual situations rather than "cases", they suggest that to live well is not a matter of being guided by authoritative rules whether of church or of academic precept or of tradition, but is rather a fine art. The aim of this series of articles — of which this is the fourth — is to take a few literary works and discuss some of the ethical issues involved. The clinical method employed is designed to bring home to readers how drama and fiction contribute to the criticism of life, in the sense of an intelligent understanding of life's problem.

Synopsis

THIS story by Katharine Fullerton Gerould concerns one Ferguson, a brilliant biologist. His work was of value to the world; he knew it; and therefore on two occasions he refused to throw away his life to save others. The first was when the steamer he was in was torpedoed. "The Argentina was a small boat, making a winter passage. There were very few cabin passengers. No second cabin, but plenty of steerage. . . . He had time to be reasonable; not instinctive. . . . He didn't do anything outrageous; he just dropped into a boat. As a result we had the big book a year later. 'Women and children?' . . . What do you suppose a lot of Neapolitan peasants meant to Ferguson?" On the second occasion "there was a grade crossing, with a 'Look out for the Engine' sign, and there was a towheaded infant in rags". He had noticed the infant before. "It had bandy legs and granulated eyelids, and seemed to be dumb." As a train approaches the child lumbers on to the track. Ferguson is about fifty yards off. "There was just time for Ferguson to decide. He could just have flung towhead out of the way by getting under the engine himself. He grabbed for towhead, but he didn't roll on to the track. So towhead was killed. If he had got there ten seconds earlier he could have done the trick. He was ten seconds too late to save both Ferguson and towhead. So — once more — he saved Ferguson."

Havelock, who is supposed to tell the story to his friend Chantry, says, "The world's moving, Chantry. Ferguson was ahead of it, beckoning. . . . Ferguson was a knight of the future — a knight of Humanity." "Don't!" shouted Chantry. "Leave chivalry out of it. The Argentina business may or may not have been wisdom, but it certainly wasn't cricket." "No", said Havelock. "Chess, rather. The game where chance hasn't a show — the game of the intelligent future. That very irregular and disconcerting move of his."

A literary critic might object to the story as being too much of a laboratory problem, but the heart of the casuist rejoices as he watches the issue emerging with such beautiful sharpness of

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definition. Ferguson's conduct seems to be right — beyond all gainsaying. It satisfies the requirements of morality. He is no coward. He is not selfishly interested in saving his own skin. He puts first his work and its value to humanity. "He wanted the greatest good of the greatest number", says Havelock. "Nothing petty about him. He was a big man." Any impartial judge, trying to weigh consequences, would have decided that Ferguson's life was of more value to the world than that of a defective infant or a Neapolitan peasant. If he had sacrificed himself on either occasion we should have been dismayed by a sense of loss. Think of the end of Meredith's novel, "Beauchamp's Career". Commander Beauchamp has lost his life in saving a small urchin from drowning:

"All the lights of the ring were turned on the head of the boy. Dr. Shrapnel's eyes and Lord Romfrey's fell on the abashed little creature. The boy struck out both arms to get his fists against his eyelids.

"This is what we have in exchange for Beauchamp!

"It was not uttered, but it was visible in the blank stare at one another of the two men who loved Beauchamp, after they had examined the insignificant bit of mudbank life remaining in this world in the place of him."

If the first elementary command of morality is to promote the general good, the second is, Be rational. *Don't* obey that impulse. Stop and think! And Ferguson was rational. No acting on instinct for him! He is cool and collected. He measures the consequences and then makes his choice.

Evidently then he did right. And yet why do we feel that it would have been more splendid if he had sacrificed his life? Is it, as Havelock maintains, just our mediæval prejudice and inability to think straight? We will not grant that, and yet, if we refuse, we find ourselves in the position of approving conduct that is obviously not moral. This is the problem which such examples of sacrifice present to us. We not only sanction but are thrilled by a deed which seems to contradict all rational morality. We may, if we choose, call it a glorious madness, but it still remains madness in that it renounces obvious good for no definable end.

My head, then, approves of Ferguson, but my heart doesn't. When I crossexamine my heart I find that it is cold, not, as Havelock suggests, because I "don't think it's decent for a man to recognize his own worth" — although any man is a fool who thinks he is indispensable — but because he was cool, rational, and calculating. There are times, says my heart, when one ought to act on impulse, and this was one of them. Life cannot be all intelligence and restraint. Audacity, faith, experiment, generous imprudence — these must have their hour. Emerson quotes with approval Cromwell's saying, "A man never rises so high as when he knows not whither he is going", and adds, "The way of life is wonderful. It is by abandonment." This is what the lover knows, and the hero and the martyr and the mystic.

Call me friend or foe,
  Little I care!
I go with all who go
  Daring to dare.

I am the force,
  I am the fire,
I am the secret source
  Of desire.

I am the urge,
  The spur and thong:
Moon of the tides that surge
  Into song!

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Call me friend or foe,
Little care I,
I go with all who go
Singing to die.

Call me friend or foe . . .
Taking to give,
I go with all who go
Dying to live.

This is the idea that has been enshrined in the code of the gentleman and the knight. The gentleman holds his life cheap: he is ready to throw it away for a trifle — for an imagined insult, a lady's ribbon, a drowning dog, or for something splendidly useless, such as climbing Mount Everest. The bad side of this ideal is, of course, its wastefulness and irresponsibility; but that does not cancel what is valuable in it. What your gentleman possesses is inward freedom. He is not so bound to anything in life that he cannot surrender it without a struggle. When the emergency comes we can be sure that there will be no reluctancies, no half gods to hold him back. His only mistake is in making of this gallant indifference a general policy, when it is appropriate only in the crises of life. But it still remains true that the crises may come, the times when impetuosity must supplant reason.

The ultimate justification of this attitude is that a life controlled exclusively by reason would be a life in which there would be neither creativeness nor discovery. For reason is essentially conservative. Its function is to extend the domain of law and to maintain the existing body of things. Of itself it does not provide initiative nor stimulate to exploration or adventure. Your purely rational lover would never propose until he was quite sure that the lady would accept him; your purely rational scientist would ignore any new fact which threatened the stability of his theories; your purely rational artist would be afraid to trust his intuition and strike out in a form not sanctioned by the canons. But all such persons cramp their souls. They miss their opportunity. The lover may forfeit his chance to discover love, your scientist may miss the new fact, the artist may deny life to a thing of beauty. The fine art of living requires, as Havelock Ellis somewhere says, not only the power of holding in but the power of letting go. And this is conspicuously true of what we call morality in the narrow sense. Every situation in the life of a human being is to some extent unique. In each there is something for which neither precedent nor established moral principle provides. In the sudden emergencies, such as Ferguson in the story faces, this element of novelty predominates and calls for the exercise of a correspondingly greater creative originality. On these occasions a man must be an artist in living. Like the artist, he must follow his intuition, he must transcend law. Otherwise there will be no moral innovations and no moral discoveries.

This, I believe, is why we fear Ferguson and his uncompromising logic. Ferguson would forbid us to take a chance, because he is opposed to gambling. But shut out the gamblers and you exclude the prophets as well. You condemn us to moral stagnation or death.

The most difficult question, however, still remains. How are we to distinguish between the gambler and the prophet, or, in other words, between the right and the wrong kind of impulsiveness, between insanity or caprice and legitimate experiment? The example of the artist may help us here. The only way we have of distinguishing between what is freakish and what is original is that the latter can ultimately be comprehended within our ideas of

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beauty while the former remains obstinately without. The same test holds in science. If the new discovery can be fitted into some coherent system of laws — the old theories, of course, may have to be revised in order to assimilate it — then it is accepted as fact. And so with the apparent insanities of the moral pioneer. If it turns out that he has extended our moral horizon, opened up new possibilities of good, and enlarged our human sympathies, we shall say that he was really inspired and that he has brought down authentic fire from heaven.

If, then, we think that the extreme form of self sacrifice may thus be justified, we are bound to try to tell wherein its moral revelation consists.

Ever since popular science taught men to chatter about the survival of the fittest, our ears have been growing accustomed to doctrines about the dangers of sacrificing the strong to the weak. The sick, the defective, the incompetent, the insane, are a burden to society, a barrier to progress. For the sake of the strong the weak should be allowed to go under. They must not stand in the way of the development of the Best Stock, the Higher Classes, the Superior Races, the Supermen. For this kind of social philosophy, progress consists in moving toward some such Utopian civilization, and the generations are only means toward its realization. The task of humanity is conceived to be the turning out of that finished social product. Or, to use another figure, humanity is pictured as an army on the march — and where would an army be if the main body always halted until all stragglers had been picked up?

If the doctrine seems plausible, it is only because we accept uncritically the analogies which it employs. Why am I to believe that the generations of mankind are simply a machine whose purpose is to *manufacture* a social product called the Superman? Or what battle is humanity fighting? In what cause does it serve? Who is the enemy? What the victory? The trouble with both analogies is that in them human beings are pictured as mere means to some end beyond themselves — the making of a Utopia or the winning of a fight. But this doctrine is the very denial of humanism. The humanist believes that human beings are not means but ends in themselves, not to be used or exploited, but to be understood, to be helped, to be appreciated. Since it is the spiritual bonds between men that are all important, the goal of human ambition is not some far off divine event, but the strengthening of the sense of solidarity between human beings, the enlargement of sympathy, the increase of understanding, tolerance, and affection. Thus, for the humanist, the tenderness of the strong for the weak and the love and gratitude of the weak toward the strong — all the feelings that bring men into a spiritual communion — are more valuable than any fine flower of humanity that might be developed through the ruthless sacrifice of the weak.

Now it is the humanist conception of life, here only indicated, to which we are recalled by examples of heroic self sacrifice. Measured by any biological or social utility, such sacrifices are not only useless, they are perniciously wasteful. (The foolishness of the Cross!) They seem like a sacrifice of flowers to weeds, fit to unfit, laggards to fighting men. But human life is not a garden or a breeding station or a battlefield. That is what your intelligent, all too intelligent, men like Ferguson forget. The true end of

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human life is the spiritual solidarity of mankind. This is the truth which shines out from the act of heroic self sacrifice. This is its revelation.

But these ideas and this justification are the results of later reflection. They are not present to the mind of the actor nor even to the immediate spectator. He who sacrifices himself is not thinking of any revelation about the meaning of human life, nor indeed of any definable benefit to mankind that may accrue from his sacrifice. He is a creator, and the moment of creation must always remain a mystery. The new moral insight, like the intuition of beauty, comes into the world without explaining itself. Unless it did so it could not constrain us.

In Shaw's play "Androcles and the Lion" there is a memorable scene between the Roman captain and the Christian Lavinia. He cannot understand why she refuses to burn the incense. "What you are facing", he says, "is certain death. You have nothing left now but your faith in this craze of yours: this Christianity. Are your Christian fairy stories any truer than our stories about Jupiter and Diana?"

LAVINIA: A man cannot die for a story and a dream. None of us believed the stories and the dreams more devoutly than poor Spintho; but he could not face the great reality. What he would have called my faith has been oozing away minute by minute whilst I've been sitting here, with reality becoming realler and realler, with stories and dreams fading away into nothing.

CAPTAIN: Are you then going to die for nothing?

LAVINIA: Yes: that is the wonderful thing. It is since all the stories and dreams have gone that I have now no doubt at all that I must die for something greater than dreams and stories.

CAPTAIN: But for what?

LAVINIA: I don't know. If it were for anything small enough to know, it would be too small to die for. I think I'm going to die for God.

CAPTAIN: What is God?

LAVINIA: When we know that, Captain, we shall be Gods ourselves.

WILD GOATS

By Anice Page Cooper

THE moon is full but it won't spill over
And it won't fall out when it hangs askew.
The bees suck honey from tall red clover
But they won't get drunk of it.
Bees never do.

I gave my love to a girl with amber
Eyes like the windows the saints shine through.
She dragged it through the brambles where wild goats clamber
But my heart won't break of it.
Hearts never do.

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DIARY OF AN EASTERN JOURNEY

By Aldous Huxley

AGRA. I am always a little uncomfortable when I find myself unable to admire something which all the rest of the world admires — or at least is reputed to admire. Am I, or is the world, the fool? Is it the world's taste that is bad, or is mine? I am reluctant to condemn myself and almost equally reluctant to believe that I alone am right. Thus, when all men (and not the professors of English literature only, but Milton too, but Wordsworth and Keats) assure me that Spenser is a great poet, I wonder what to do. For to me Spenser seems only a virtuoso, a man with the conjurer's trick of extracting perfectly rhymed stanzas, by the hundred, out of an empty mind. Perhaps I am unduly prejudiced in favor of sense; but it has always seemed to me that poets should have something to say. Spenser's is the art of saying nothing, at length, in rhyme and rumbling metre. The world admires; but I cannot. I wish I could.

Here at Agra I find myself afflicted by the same sense of discomfort. The Taj Mahal is one of the seven wonders. My guidebook — always bold in asserting what everybody will agree to — assures me that it is "perhaps the most beautiful building in the world". Following its advice, we drove out to have our first look at the marvel by the light of the setting sun. Nature did its best for the Taj. The west was duly red and orange and yellow and, finally, emerald green grading into pale and flawless blue toward the zenith. Two evening stars, Venus and Mercury, pursued the sunken sun. The sacred Jumna was like a sheet of silver between its banks. Beyond it the plains stretched greyly away into the vapors of distance. The gardens were rich with turf, with cypresses, palms, and peepul trees, with long shadows and rosy lights, with the noise of grasshoppers, the calling of enormous owls, the indefatigable hammering of a coppersmith bird. Nature, I repeat, did its best. But though it adorned, it could not improve the works of man. The Taj, even at sunset, even reverberated upside down from tanks and river, even in conjunction with melancholy cypresses — the Taj was a disappointment.

My failure to appreciate the Taj is due, I think, to the fact that, while I am very fond of architecture and the decorative arts, I am very little interested in the expensive or the picturesque, as such and by itself. Now the great qualities of the Taj are precisely those of expensiveness and picturesqueness. Milk-white among its dark cypresses, flawlessly mirrored, it is positively the *Todteninsel* of Arnold Boecklin come true. And its costliness is fabulous. Its marbles are carved and filigreed, are patterned with an inlay of precious stones. The smallest rose or poppy on the royal tombs is an affair of twenty or thirty carnelians, onyxes, agates, chrysolites. The New Jerusalem was not more rich in variety of precious pebbles. If the Viceroy took it into his head to build another Taj identical with the first, he would have to spend as much as a fifteenth, or even perhaps a twelfth

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or tenth of what he spends each year on the Indian army. Imagination staggers. . . .

This inordinate costliness is what most people seem to like about the Taj. And if they are disappointed with it (I have met several who were, and always for the same reason) it is because the building is not quite so expensive as they thought it was. Clambering among the roofs, they have found evidence to show that the marble is only a veneer over cheaper masonry, not solid. It is a swindle! Meanwhile the guides and guardians are earning their money by insisting on the Taj's costliness. "All marble," they say, "all precious stones." They want you to touch as well as look, to realize the richness not with eyes alone, but intimately, with the fingers. I have seen guides in Europe doing the same. Expensiveness is everywhere admired. The average tourist is moved to greater raptures by St. Peter's than by his own St. Paul's. The interior of the Roman basilica is all of marble; St. Paul's is only Portland stone. The relative architectural merits of the two churches are not for a moment considered.

Architecturally, the worst features of the Taj are its minarets. These four thin tapering towers standing at the four corners of the platform on which the Taj is built are among the ugliest structures ever erected by human hands. True, the architect might offer a number of excuses for his minarets. He would begin by pointing out that, the dimensions of the main building and the platform being what they are, it was impossible to give the four subsidiary structures more than a certain limited mass between them, a mass small in proportion to the Taj itself. Architecturally, no doubt, it would have been best to put this definitely limited mass into four low buildings of comparatively large plan. But unfortunately, the exigencies of religion made it necessary to put the available mass into minarets. This mass being small, it was necessary that the minarets should be very thin for their height.

These excuses, so far as they go, are perfectly valid. By the laws of religion there had to be minarets and by the laws of proportion the minarets had to be unconscionably slender. But there was no need to make them feebly taper, there was no need to surround the shaft of the minarets with thick clumsy balconies, placed, moreover, at just the wrong intervals of distance from one another and from the ground.

The Taj itself is marred by none of the faults which characterize the minarets. But its elegance is at the best of a very dry and negative kind. Its "classicism" is the product not of intellectual restraint imposed on an exuberant fancy, but of an actual deficiency of fancy, a poverty of imagination. One is struck at once by the lack of variety in the architectural forms of which it is composed. There are, for all practical purposes, only two contrasting formal elements in the whole design — the onion dome, reproduced in two dimensions in the pointed arches of the recessed bays, and the flat wall surface with its sharply rectangular limits. When the Taj is compared with more or less contemporary European buildings in the neo-classic style of the High Renaissance and Baroque periods, this poverty in the formal elements composing it becomes very apparent. Consider, for example, St. Paul's. The number of component forms in its design is very large. We have the hemispherical dome, the great colonnaded cylinder of the drum, the flat side walls relieved by square faced pilasters and rounded niches; we have,

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at one end, the curved surfaces of the apse and, at the other, the West Front with its porch — a design of detached cylinders, the pillars, seen against a flat wall and supporting yet another formal element, the triangular pediment. If it is argued that St. Paul's is a very much larger building than the Taj and that we should therefore expect the number of contrasting elements in its design to be greater, we may take a smaller specimen of late Renaissance architecture as our standard of comparison. I suggest Palladio's Rotonda at Vicenza, a building somewhat smaller than the Taj and, like it, of regular design and domed. Analyzing the Rotonda we shall find that it consists of a far larger number of formal elements than does the Taj and that its elegance, in consequence, is much richer, much more subtle and various than the poor, dry, negative elegance characteristic of the Indian building.

But it is not necessary to go as far as Europe to find specimens of a more varied and imaginative elegance than that of the Taj. The Hindu architects produced buildings incomparably more rich and interesting as works of art than the Taj. I have not visited southern India where, it is said, the finest specimens of Hindu architecture are to be found. But I have seen enough of the art in Rajputana to convince me of its enormous superiority to any work of the Mohammedans. The temples at Chitor, for example, are specimens of true classicism. They are the products of a prodigious, an almost excessive, fancy, held in check and directed by the most judicious intelligence. Their elegance — and in their way they are just as elegant as the Taj — is an opulent and subtle elegance, full of unexpected felicities. The formal elements of their design are numerous and pleasingly contrasted and the detail — moldings and ornamental sculpture — is always, however copious, subordinated to the architectural scheme and of the highest decorative quality.

In this last respect Hindu ornament is decidedly superior to that employed by the later Moguls. The *pietra dura* work at the Taj and the Shahdara tombs at Lahore is marvelously neat in execution and of extravagant costliness. These qualities are admirable enough in their way; but they have nothing to do with the decorative value of the work considered as art. Decoratively, as works of art, the *pietra dura* work decorations of the Taj are poor and uninteresting. Arabesques of far finer design are to be seen in the carved and painted ornamentation of Rajput palaces and temples. As for the bas reliefs of flowers which adorn the gateway of the Taj — these are frankly bad. The design of them vacillates uncertainly between realism and conventionalism. They are neither lifelike portraits of flowers nor good pieces of free floral decoration. How anyone who has ever seen a fine specimen of decorative flower painting or flower carving, whether Hindu or European, can possibly admire these feebly laborious reliefs passes my understanding. Indeed, it seems to me that anyone who professes an ardent admiration for the Taj must look at it without having any standards of excellence in his mind — as though the thing existed uniquely, in a vacuum. But the Taj exists in a world well sprinkled with masterpieces of architecture and decoration. Compare it with these and the imperial mausoleum at once takes its proper place in the hierarchy of art — well down below the best. But it is made of marble. Marble, I perceive, covers a multitude of sins.

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Fatehpur Sikri. Akbar built the city as a small personal tribute to himself. The vanity of Indian potentates had a way of running to brand new cities. Witness Jai Singh's Jaipur, five miles from the existing and perfectly satisfactory town of Amber; Jodha's Jodhpur, an hour's walk from Mandor; the Udaipur of Udai Singh, next door to Arh. An expensive form of royal vanity; but one for which the modern tourist should be grateful. There is nothing more picturesque than a deserted city, nothing more mournfully romantic. These deserted cities of northern India are particularly romantic because, being relatively modern, they are all in an excellent state of preservation. For a building that is intact, but deserted, is much more romantic, more picturesquely melancholy, than a deserted ruin. One expects a ruin to be deserted; nobody, it is obvious, could possibly live in Pompeii, or among the roofless remains of an English abbey. But in a building that is intact one expects to find inhabitants. When such a building is deserted, we are mournfully surprised, and the contrast between its emptiness and intactness strikes us as being strange and suggestive.

Fatehpur is less than four hundred years old and, so far as the principal buildings are concerned, it is in a state of perfect preservation. The red sandstone which Akbar used in the building of his city is a hard, weather resisting rock. The sculpture, the moldings, are still clean edged and sharp. There has been no blurring of outlines, no crumbling, no leprous decay. Akbar's red city stands today in the condition in which he left it — and stands empty, untenanted even by the monkeys which inhabit so many of India's deserted palaces and temples.

To those whom the dry and sterile elegance of Shah Jahan's Agra has left unsatisfied, the architecture of Fatehpur Sikri will seem refreshing. For the greatest of the alien Mohammedan emperors was a patron of the indigenous Hindu art of India, and the architecture of his capital is marked by something of the genuine Hindu vigor and wealth of imagination. The *liwan* or covered portion of the mosque is particularly fine. It is divided up into three square chambers, in line and communicating; and the characteristically Hindu ceilings of these chambers are supported by a number of very tall Hindu columns. The building is superb in proportion and detail and is certainly one of the finest pieces of interior architecture on a large scale to be seen in upper India. And yet, such is the prestige of expensive material that poor uninteresting buildings wholly lacking in grandeur or originality, like the Pearl Mosque at Agra, the pavilions by the lake at Ajmer, are much more widely celebrated. They are of marble; Fatehpur is only of sandstone.

It was late in the afternoon when we left the deserted city. The walls and domes glowed more rosily than ever in the light of the almost level sun. It had become a city of coral. There was a screaming in the air above us. Looking up, we saw a flock of parrots flying across the pale sky. The shadow of the enormous Gate of Victory was upon them; but a moment later they emerged from it into the bright transfiguring sunlight. Over the courts of that deserted city of coral and ruddy gold a flight of emerald birds passed glittering and was gone.

Jaipur. Jaipur did not casually grow; it was made. Its streets are broad and straight, and intersect one another at right angles, like the streets

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of Turin or of some American city. The houses are all bright pink and look like those charming and curiously improbable pieces of architecture in the backgrounds of Italian primitives. It is an orthodox and pious town. The pavements are thronged with ruminating bulls and Brahmins and fakirs; the shops do a thriving trade in phallic symbols of which the manufacture, in gilt and painted marble, seems to be one of the staple industries of the place. In the streets men ride, on horses, on enormous camels; or are driven in ancient victorias, in still more extraordinary four wheelers that look like sections cut out of third class railway coaches, or, most often, in little carts with domed canopies and (if the occupants happen to be ladies) concealing curtains, drawn by smart pairs of trotting bullocks, whose horns are painted green. Only the women of the people are visible in the streets. They move with the princely grace of those who, with pots and baskets on their heads, have passed their lives in practising the deportment of queens. Their full skirts swing as they walk and at every step the heavy brass bangles at their feet make a loud and, oh! — for this is India — a mournfully symbolical clanking as of fetters.

At Jaipur we were fortunate in having an introduction to one of the great *thakurs* of the state. He was a mighty land holder, the owner of twenty villages with populations ranging from five hundred to as many thousand, a feudal lord who paid for his fief (until, a year or two ago, a somewhat simpler and more modern system of tenure was introduced) by contributing to the state army one hundred and fifty armed and mounted men. This nobleman was kind enough to place his elephant at our disposal.

It was a superb and particularly lofty specimen, with gold mounted tusks; ate two hundredweights of food a day and must have cost at least six hundred a year to keep. An expensive pet. But for a man in the *thakur's* position, we gathered, indispensable, a necessity. Pachyderms in Rajputana are what glass coaches were in Europe a century and a half ago — essential luxuries.

The *thakur* was a charming and cultured man, hospitably kind as only Indians can be. But at the risk of seeming ungrateful, I must confess that, of all the animals I have ever ridden, the elephant is the most uncomfortable mount. On the level, it is true, the motion is not too bad. One seems to be riding on a small and chronic earthquake; that is all. The earthquake becomes more disquieting when the beast begins to climb. But when it goes down hill, it is like the end of the world. The animal descends very slowly and with an infinite caution, planting one huge foot deliberately before the other and giving you time between the carefully calculated steps to anticipate the next convulsive spasm of movement — a spasm that seems to loosen from its place every organ in the body, that twists the spine, that wrenches all the separate muscles of the loins and thorax. The hills round Jaipur are not very high. Fortunately; for by the end of the three or four hundred feet of our climbing and descending we had almost reached the limits of our endurance. I returned full of admiration for Hannibal. He crossed the Alps on an elephant.

We made two expeditions with the pachyderm: one — over a rocky pass entailing, there and back, two climbs and two sickening descents — to the tanks and ruined temples of Galta, and one to the deserted palaces of Amber. Emerging from the palace precincts —

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I record the trivial and all too homely incident, because it set me mournfully reflecting about the cosmos — our monster halted and, with its usual deliberation, relieved nature, portentously. Hardly, the operation over, had it resumed its march, when an old woman who had been standing at the door of a hovel among the ruins, expectantly waiting — we had wondered for what — darted forward and fairly threw herself on the mound of steaming excrement. There was fuel here, I suppose, for a week's cooking. "*Salaam, Maharaj*", she called up to us, bestowing in her gratitude the most opulent title she could lay her tongue to. Our passage had been to her like a sudden and unexpected fall of manna. She thanked us, she blessed the great and charitable Jumbo for his gargantuan bounty.

Our earthquake lurched on. I thought of the scores of millions of human beings to whom the passage of an unconstipated elephant seems a godsend, a stroke of enormous good luck. The thought depressed me. Why are we here, men and women, eighteen hundred millions of us, on this remarkable and perhaps unique planet? To what end? Is it to go about looking for dung — cow dung, horse dung, the enormous and princely excrement of elephants? Evidently it is — for a good many of us at any rate. It seemed an inadequate reason, I thought, for our being here — immortal souls, first cousins of the angels, own brothers of Buddha and Mozart and Sir Isaac Newton.

But a little while later I saw that I was wrong to let the consideration depress me. If it depressed me, that was only because I looked at the whole matter from the wrong end, so to speak. In painting my mental picture of the dung searchers I had filled my foreground with the figures of Buddha, Sir Isaac Newton, and the rest of them. These, I perceived, should have been relegated to the remote background, and the foreground should have been filled with cows and elephants. The picture so arranged, I should have been able to form a more philosophical and proportionable estimate of the dung searchers. For I should have seen at a glance how vastly superior were their activities to those of the animal producers of dung in the foreground. The philosophical Martian would admire the dung searchers for having discovered a use for dung; no other animal, he would point out, has had the wit to do more than manufacture it.

We are not Martians and our training makes us reluctant to think of ourselves as animals. Nobody inquires why cows and elephants inhabit the world. There is as little *reason* why we should be here, eating, drinking, sleeping, and in the intervals reading metaphysics, saying prayers, or collecting dung. We *are* here, that is all; and like other animals we do what our native capacities and our environment permit of our doing. Our achievement, when we compare it with that of the cows and elephants, is remarkable. They automatically make dung; we collect it and turn it into fuel. It is not something to be depressed about; it is something to be proud of. Still, in spite of the consolations of philosophy, I remained pensive.

Amber. There is a mirror room in the fort at Agra; there are others in almost all the palaces of Rajputana. But the prettiest of them all are the mirror rooms in the palace of Amber. Indeed, I never remember to have seen mirrors anywhere put to better decorative use than here, in this deserted Rajput palace of the seventeenth

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century. There are no large sheets of glass at Amber; there is no room for large sheets. A bold and elegant design in raised plaster work covers the walls and ceiling; the mirrors are small and shaped to fit into the interstices of the plaster pattern. Like all old mirrors they are grey and rather dim. Looking into them you see "through a glass, darkly". They do not portray the world with that glaring realism which characterizes the reverberations of modern mirrors. But their greatest charm is that they are slightly convex, so that every piece gives back its own small particular image of the world and each, when the shutters are opened, or a candle is lit, has a glint in its grey surface like the curved high light in an eye.

They are wonderfully rich, these mirror rooms at Amber. Their elaborateness surpasses that even of the famous mirror room at Bagheria, near Palermo. But whereas the Sicilian room is nothing more than the old fashioned, glass and gilding merry-go-round made stationary, the Indian rooms are a marvel of cool and elegant refinement. True, this form of decoration does not lend itself to the adornment of large areas of wall or ceiling; it is too intricate for that. But fortunately the rooms in Indian palaces are seldom large. In a country where it rains with a punctual regularity and only at one season of the year, large rooms of assembly are unnecessary. Crowds are accommodated and ceremonials of state performed more conveniently out of doors than in. The Hall of Audience in an Indian palace is a small pillared pavilion placed at one end of an open courtyard. The king sat in the pavilion, his courtiers and petitioners thronged the open space. Every room in the palace was a private room, a place of intimacy. One must not come to India expecting to find grandiose specimens of interior architecture. There are no long colonnaded vistas, no galleries receding interminably according to all the laws of perspective, no colossal staircases, no vaults so high that, at night, the lamplight can hardly reach them. Here in India there are only small rooms adorned with the elaborate decoration that is meant to be looked at from close to and in detail. Such are the mirror rooms at Amber.

Bikaner. The desert of Rajputana is a kind of Sahara, but smaller and without oases. Traveling across it, one looks out over plains of brown dust. Once in every ten or twenty yards, some grey-green plant, deep rooted and too thorny for even the camels to eat, tenaciously and with a kind of desperate vegetable ferocity struggles for life. And at longer intervals, draining the moisture of a rood of land, there rise, here and there, the little stunted trees of the desert. From close at hand the sparseness of their distantly scattered growth is manifest. But seen in depth down the long perspective of receding distance, they seem — like the remotely scattered stars of the Milky Way — numerous and densely packed. Close at hand the desert is only rarely flecked by shade; but the further distances seem fledged with a dense growth of trees. The foreground is always desert, but on every horizon there is the semblance of shadowy forests. The train rolls on and the forests remain forever on the horizon; around one is always and only the desert.

Bikaner is the metropolis of this desert, a great town islanded in the sand. The streets are unpaved, but clean. The sand of which they are made desiccates and drinks up every

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impurity that falls upon it. And what astonishing houses flank these streets! Huge *palazzi* of red sandstone, carved and fretted from basement to attic, their blank walls — wherever a wall has been left blank — whitewashed and painted with garishly ingenuous modern frescoes of horses, of battles, of trains running over bridges, of ships. These houses, the like of which we had seen in no other city, are the palaces of the Marwari merchants, the Jews of India, who go forth from their desert into the great towns, whence they return with the fruits of their business ability to their native place. Some of them are said to be fabulously wealthy and Bikaner has, I suppose, more millionaires per thousand of population than any other town in the world.

We were shown over the country villa of one of these plutocrats, built in the desert a mile or two beyond the city wall. Costly and unflagging labor had created and conserved in the teeth of the sand, the scorching wind of summer and the winter frosts, a garden of trees and lawns, of roses and English vegetables. It is the marvel of Bikaner.

The sun was setting as we reached the bungalow. A little army of coolies was engaged in covering the lawns with tarpaulin sheets and fitting canvas greatcoats on all the shrubs. The night frosts are dangerous at this season. In summer, on the other hand, it is by day that the verdure must be jacketed. Such is horticulture in Rajputana.

I had hoped, too optimistically, to find in the Marwari plutocrats the modern equivalents of the Florentine merchant princes of the quattrocento. But this pleasing bubble of illusion burst, with an almost audible pop, as we passed from the millionaire's garden into his house. The principal drawing room was furnished almost exclusively with those polychromatic *art nouveau* busts that issue from the workshops of the tombstone manufacturers of Carrara, and with clockwork toys. These last had all been set going, simultaneously, in our honor. A confused ticking and clicking filled the air, and wherever we looked our eyes were dizzied by movement. Tigers, almost life sized, nodded their heads. Pink papier-mâché pigs opened and shut their mouths. Clocks in the form of Negroes rolled their eyes; in the form of fox terriers wagged their tails and, opening their jaws to bark, uttered a tick; in the form of donkeys agitated their long ears sixty times a minute. And, preciously covered by a glass dome, a porcelain doll, dressed in the Paris fashions of 1900, jerkily applied a powder puff to its nose and jerkily reached back to the powder box — again and again. These, evidently, are the products of our Western civilization which the East really admires. I remembered a certain brooch which I had seen one evening, at a dinner party, on the *sari* of an Indian lady of great wealth and the highest position — a brooch consisting of a disk of blue enamel surrounded by diamonds, on the face of which two large brilliants revolved, by clockwork, in concentric circles and opposite directions. It was an eight day brooch, I learned, wound every Sunday night.

In the desert, five miles out of Bikaner, stands a city of tombs, the cenotaphs of the Maharajas and their royal kindred. They are to be counted by scores and hundreds — little white domes perched on pillars, or covering cells of masonry. Under each dome a little slab bears the name of the commemorated dead. In the older tombs these slabs are carved with crude

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reliefs representing the prince, sometimes on horseback, sometimes sitting on his throne, accompanied by as many of his wives and concubines as burned themselves to death on his funeral pyre. Few of these Maharajas of an earlier generation left the world without taking with them two or three unfortunate women. Some of them were accompanied to the fire by six, seven, and in one case, I counted, even nine victims. On the slab their images form a little frieze below the image of their lord and master — a row of small identical figures stretching across the stone. Nine luscious Hindu beauties, deep bosomed, small waisted, sumptuously haunched — their portraits are deliciously amusing. But, looking at them, I could not help remembering the dreadful thing these little sculptures commemorated. I thought of the minutes of torment that ushered them out of life into this comical world of art which they now inhabit, under the weather stained domes in the desert. Every here and there stands a tomb on whose central slab is carved a small conventional pair of feet. These are the feet of those royal ladies who, for one reason or another, did not commit *sati*. Each time I saw a pair of these marble feet I felt like calling for cheers.

TOWERS AND SILENCE

By Robert P. Tristram Coffin

TOWERS and silence, all holy lonely things,
Befriend me, now that Youth has fared afar
And I can feel no more tears sweet to joy
When I gaze upon the evening star.

I do not know what day Youth said farewell;
But one blue day the trees all stood and sang
Together and together, and in my brain
I heard great doors swing to with brazen clang.

And suddenly the winds were all too swift
And clouds too high and glorious, and I knew
Youth had gone and I was sole alone
On an endless road where dead things grew.

And I was sole alone. . . . My feet moved on
Along the road that leads through starry space
And never ends. O towers and silence, wrap
Your holy healing shadows round my face!

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Tom Outland

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MY FAVORITE CHARACTER IN FICTION

By Zona Gale

Sketched by Anne Merriman Peck

THE best that I can do in naming a favorite character in fiction is to name the one which is occupying my thought at the moment. One has a new favorite character for every new favorite book. If I tried to name them all I should have to give a party. The character who occupies my mind at the moment is Tom Outland in Willa Cather's "The Professor's House", and this is for the same reason that a little while ago I was thinking most of the protagonist in Johan Bojer's "The Great Hunger". And for years, still earlier, of the bishop who offered up candlesticks instead of candles. And in my little girlhood, of Sydney Carton who said "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done." I suppose therefore that what I mean by my joy in Tom Outland is that he is one more who can set free whatever is in him by identifying himself with a great idea. Does not the slang phrase "What's the great idea?" seem, as many slang phrases seem, to voice a profound spiritual wonder. What *is* the great idea? The bishop found it, Sydney Carton found it, and the "Great Hunger" man found it in self identification with an idea. In every case, under whatever guise, the process was the same—the identification of self with some precious idea. To buy the soul of a "thief" with a gift of two candlesticks; to sow rye in an enemy's empty field; to ride off to the guillotine in somebody's place; and to develop a passion for the preservation of the heritage of a desert and of a dead people —these are not so different, since by such things the provincial limitations of self give way to the universal field of group emotion. The provincial self about its own affairs is a fascinating field for literary research; but what *amour* or personal adventure which Tom Outland might have had could be so emotionally thrilling as the passion and the hope and the understanding which he puts into this quest? In him Miss Cather creates a living being, passionately pursuing an objective that has no personal taint. He expresses the love of the unknown which is the basic hunger of the race. He has caught "the Great Idea".

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MY FAVORITE CHARACTER IN FICTION

By Louis Bromfield

Sketched by Anne Merriman Peck

THE choice of a favorite character in fiction seems, at the outset, as difficult as the choice of a favorite character from among one's innumerable acquaintances. If it were a question of history, the answer would be easy enough: I should rather have been Voltaire than any other. But that is not quite the same thing. The final answer must be reached, I suppose, by a process of elimination. Primarily the women of fiction interest me far more than the men. Among the men I can think of only two for whom I have a sympathy and liking of the first order—Jude Fawley and Lord Jim. Among the women I know two at least with whom it would be possible to fall in love—Irene Forsyte and Doña Rita of "The Arrow of Gold". Daisy Miller moves me almost to tears and Trollope's Mrs. Proudie seems to me one of the great creations of our literature. George Eliot's Maggie Tulliver is immensely human and moving, and the servant Françoise in Proust's "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu" ought surely to be listed among the great characters. And if ever an author told the truth, he would admit, I am sure, an affection for some of his own characters; else why should he have created them? Frankly I am in love with Lily Shane and have a fine cold blooded admiration for Sabine Callendar and Ellen Tolliver. But they are of course *hors de combat.* There are too the hosts of characters in Dickens, literally scores of them; but the final choice must come among characters who have had the power to dominate circumstance . . . the powerful ones, women like Becky Sharp and Sophia Baines of "The Old Wives' Tale". A choice must be made, so I close my eyes and say "Becky Sharp"—the Becky Sharp of the opening pages of "Vanity Fair", the Becky Sharp who hurled Doctor Johnson's Dictionary back into the face of the startled Semiramis of Hammersmith. It is a gesture I like in dealing with life, a gallant gesture that is refreshing, especially in this day of sad defeated young men and women.

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Becky Sharp

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THE LONDONER

Fashionable Writers and the Vagaries of Public Taste — Writing to Formula — Novelists Extinguished by the War — A Bookseller upon the Great Dead — Sir Sidney Lee

LONDON, *April* 1, 1926.

I READ recently an article by one of our youngest and I think one of our ablest young critics (though jargon often trips him and readiness betrays him into impertinence), Edwin Muir, which dealt with the literary spirit of the time. In this article I saw that the most brilliant of the young intellectual novelists was dismissed as "fashionable". It sounded very damning, and in fact is much more damning than it sounds. I hope Mr. Muir was wrong about this particular writer, for whom I have an affection, and of whose talent I have expectations; but the point is legitimate enough. Unfortunately Mr. Muir's world is that of the intellectuals, and his interests seem to be bounded by those of his world. One can accept the creative sterility of this world as a pretty constant factor in modern letters, and one can accept also the fact that the war has made polished wits a little restless. I do not think, however, that the bulk of mankind would be disposed to regard the intellectuals as representative of the spirit of the time; and I have been wondering, in my artless way, what literary fashion really is. That it is something wider than Mr. Muir supposes I am convinced, because even the "fashionable" writer of whom Mr. Muir speaks has a smaller circulation than many writers who are never heard of in Mr. Muir's circle. I do not confuse fashion and circulation; but there are several publics, and one can indicate the existence of an intelligent public, as distinguished equally from the intellectuals and the yawning, sentimental maw of the multitude, only by reference to comparative circulations. The intellectuals, of course, are vocal. One can hear their remarks everywhere, and can read what they have to say about one another in various sheets devoted to the interests of the hour. But my own interest is not wholly in the tastes or the literary performances of the younger intellectuals (strange as that would seem to themselves), and I should like to know something that I feel Mr. Muir could not tell me. I should like to know, in fact, why it is that Tom, Dick, and Harry, who represent the spirit of the time rather more generally than the intellectuals can do, are reading a different sort of book from the sort they were reading ten years ago, twenty years ago, or thirty years ago. Not many of them are reading James Joyce. Very large numbers of them are reading Sir Philip Gibbs. Why Sir Philip Gibbs rather than (it must be understood that I am not comparing the authors, but merely taking names at random), for example, L. H. Myers, the author of "The Orissers"? Why, to take a very obvious case, did the costume novelists who were in vogue at the beginning of the century lose that vogue suddenly? Why, in this connection, has Rafael Sabatini, who has been publishing novels of adventure for many years, risen with a swirl to the height of great

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popularity in this very field? Why is it that Marie Corelli was hurled from enormous sales to comparative unpopularity? Or Mrs. Humphry Ward — how did it come about that this lady, who at the time of "Lady Rose's Daughter" must have enjoyed something like a hundred thousand sale in England alone, dropped in her last years of life to the appearance (for I do not know the facts) of selling something like twenty thousand copies of a new book? I may do injustice to Mrs. Ward's sales, and I judge only by appearances. One somehow had the feeling that Mrs. Ward was less popular than she had been. One felt that she had written too much; yet there were many novelists of her time, and there are many of our own day, whose sales have not shown any marked slump in spite of continued production at a high level of mediocrity. It will be said, of course, that in some cases work deteriorates, while in other cases it improves. True enough, work is variable in quality. True, also, that once popularity has reached its height it must sooner or later tend to diminish. In novel writing, as in the world of horticulture, it is clear that "the rose that once has blown forever dies". But the horticultural simile does not explain why popular taste, which often survives a quite remarkable decline in a writer's talent, will frequently — as if all at once — fly right away from an author and leave him lamenting. One may see in ordinary human affairs the behavior of those who suddenly lose taste for each other and are estranged. More usually it is one of the parties who loses taste, while the other laments and is inconsolable. In the literary world the loss of taste is rarely as sudden as this. I think it has generally been possible to see for some years the coming on of a decline in any author's popularity. But this is not always the case. Popularity may subsist for a time after fashion has gone. Popularity is for the author, and fashion is for the type of book. But there have been a number of extraordinary slumps in personal popularity, more especially in America, where the market is more sensitive to changes of taste than it is in England. What explains this phenomenon? Mr. Muir would perhaps say, the time spirit. This, I think, is but half true. Nowadays there is such a push and press of books and authors, of boosts and stunts, that just as in a garden one will see one plant shoot up far in excess of its fellows, weaken, and run through its strength while the more moderate plants continue slowly to flower and flourish, so authors rocket to fame and fall sharply into insignificance, while other writers, less exuberant in their flowering, live longer and give more continuous delight. That is not the spirit of the time so much as the accident of the time. Or rather, the spirit of the time is a very volatile spirit indeed.

* * * *

But there is another explanation, which does not involve the conjuration of spirits. It is this. Those writers who express in their own personalities a large measure of what is common to their neighbors will at all times run into large sales. Harold Bell Wright, in America, and Ethel M. Dell, in England, have each given expression to the desires of many human beings. Theirs are not the only books to be read and liked; but they are liked in an extreme degree. For instance, I remember being, as it were, "in" at the beginning of the tremendous English popularity of Gene Stratton-Porter. I was staying at a hotel in the south of England shortly before the

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war, and one morning I heard a very stout woman with a very unctuous voice call across to an hotel acquaintance at the other side of the room: "Oh, I've just read such a *pretty* book. It's such a *nice* book. 'A Girl of the Limberlost.' It's what I call a really *nice* book." I have never forgotten that. The stout woman spoke with such obvious sincerity, with such horrible oiliness, that I am sure everybody in the dining room, except myself, went off at once and bought or borrowed a copy of "A Girl of the Limberlost". No professional booster could have spoken so convincingly. This one had genuinely liked the book, and one knew why she had liked it. "A Girl of the Limberlost" had made her feel *good.* Something similar must have happened in the case of "If Winter Comes". Something remotely similar must happen in the case of practically every big popular success. For one reason or another this success has stirred whatever is the equivalent of emotion in a large mass of unimaginative readers. Let us put a hypothetical instance. Suppose that I were to write a novel about an absent minded professor who was wrecked upon a desert island with a beautiful girl; and suppose that by the grace of solemnity I really liked writing a book upon the theme of an absent minded professor, etc., and was carried by this theme to a height of extreme eloquence. Suppose the book, as an American professor once said a book did, "reeked with cerebration". And with other things. And that it made one of the biggest successes of our day. I know what I should do if it did that; but never mind. Assuming that I am the author of this great success, what — according to precept — follows? Immediately, I am assailed by all sorts of editors, film magnates, and others, who want to make my fortune. There are two alternatives open to me. I can either go on writing books about kindred situations; or I can go back to the kind of writing that is natural to me. In either case, I cannot expect to maintain the success I have won. The probability is that the formula upon which I have stumbled will tire those who read its third or fourth example. Or, by going back to my ordinary style I shall go back to something less than my ordinary sale (having shed those readers of my earlier works who are disgusted with my success). What does the average popular writer do as a general rule? Whatever his formula, he tries to repeat his success. He writes the same book over and over again. He tries to extend a vogue into a permanent success. I do not say that he does this deliberately. I do not think he does. But something inside him says: "They liked that one. . . ." Human nature does the rest. Now we all know what we call the man who tells us the same story over and over again in conversation. We call him, with various modifications, a bore. Similarly, the man who writes the same book over and over again is a bore. He bores his readers; and they leave him. The tired mind plods on and produces yet another variant of the same old story; and when that last fatal variant is a failure — "Well, what *do* they want?" asks the weary writer. He is like the heroine of "The Statue and the Bust" — "One day the lady saw her youth depart" (only in his case it is not youth but prosperity). He has told the tale once too often. Alas! It is the penalty of adherence to a formula.

* * * *

During the war period a very painful situation arose in England in rela-

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tion to a few novelists who before the war had sold just sufficiently well to show a modest profit to themselves and to the publishers. There were some oldish stagers, that is, who managed with each book to scrape along to a sale of about two thousand copies. When the war sent up prices for printing, binding, paper, etc., two thousand copies became an unremunerative sale for a novel. It was still possible for a young author to get his work published because his publisher thought there was always a chance that this young author might sweep to sales of ten or even twenty thousand copies. But with the older men, who had sold their two thousand for season after season, matters were really desperate. It could not be hoped that they would spring a surprise. What was more likely was that the two thousand copies of former seasons might shrink to fifteen hundred, to a thousand, to eight hundred. . . . What happened was that these authors disappeared from the lists of their publishers. Some of them made fitful appearances in lists other than those which they had adorned hitherto. Some of them pathetically sent manuscripts upon hopeless journeys. The rest was, and has been, silence. The authors fell back, I suppose, upon some other kind of work. They died. Or they lived upon help from others. I cannot tell. I never had any personal acquaintance with the writers to whom I refer (at least, I had a very casual acquaintance with one of them when I was a beginner, and have not seen his name for a good seven or eight years), and I have merely observed in the way of business that they have ceased to write and publish novels.

The wartime, indeed, made a great difference to many writers and it is open to anybody to say that the change of taste is due to postwar disillusion, etc. I can remember how in the opinions of men such as Maurice Hewlett and H. B. Marriott-Watson the war was going to produce a great revival of romantic literature. I see no sign of this revival, but it may be coming. I see signs of other forms of literature, and these are interesting enough, although they do not seem to me to be specifically "creative". There is much decorative writing, much that is experimental as to form, experimental as to content, and so on. But of any clear line apart from Mr. Muir's "fashionable" writer and other "fashionable" writers, I see nothing definite. Many ingenious novels are being written, and much good and valuable work is being done (I do not wish to be misunderstood, even for a moment, upon this point; and though I scoff at the intellectuals I am by no means disposed to sneer at what is being done both in America and in England by writers of all kinds); but the direction of such work is to my mind not universal enough to justify serious discussion of the time spirit.

* * * *

It is just this question which is agitating the minds of the more alert publishers both here and in the United States. They do not know where their best sellers are coming from. They can see talent all about them, and they can see the point and the value of such experiments as the more clever young ones are making. They also are not sure whether the older writers are going to hold or lose or lose and recover their ground. They are faced upon the one hand with old writers who are wearying their readers with repetitions of former successes. They are faced upon the other with experimentalists who are jazzing, impressionizing, quiz-

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zing themselves or the universe, posing, imitating, and turning out novels which are little more than — if they are as much as — facile journalism of the emotions, events, excitements, of the moment. There are perhaps a few novelists upon whom publishers can more or less hopefully rely — men who are only half "fashionable" and who have not yet turned their backs upon coherence and "story"; and who at the other end of the scale are not so sentimental as to rouse the scorn of readers who are being laughed at for being fond of a happy ending and of "nice" characters. But who can tell? Successes of curiosity, and successes of fashion; successes of theme and successes of treatment. The only real success is that of personality, and until some personality arises who captures the popular interest as the older personalities have done, I see no likelihood of an enduring reputation's being made among the younger men. As for the old ones — I mean, those without personality, whose success has been won by chance, by theme, or by formula — I see no prospect for them. Their present failure is an indication that they have lost touch with the life of their fellows, and this is the result of some atrophying of one or more of their faculties. They have not kept "in condition", because if they had done so they would still be illustrating life afresh for their readers, and furnishing from out their great experience such new richnesses as would continue to thrill their onetime admirers. It is a sad thing for any man to grow old; but the writer grows old as soon as ever he settles comfortably into a groove, and says, with a satisfied sigh: "There! That's safe. It's only a matter of a book a year; and I can spend the rest of my days in comfort." On the contrary! Up, the pioneers!

Speaking of this subject reminds me that a bookseller who has lately retired from business in London gave an interviewer two or three shocks. He has had fifty three years' service in a well known and much frequented shop in the City, and his opinion, "formed by the public's demand" of the great dead, is as follows:

Ruskin. — Dead as a door-nail.
Carlyle. — Only in slightly better condition than Ruskin.
Swift. — Finished except so far as "Gulliver's Travels" is concerned.
Thackeray. — Only "Vanity Fair" and "Pendennis" keeping his name alive.
Classical books are little in favour nowadays.

I can confirm what this bookseller says of Ruskin, and I think many of those publishers who hailed the coming out of copyright of Ruskin's works about 1907 must have lost money upon their piratical enterprises. They thought, I believe, that cheap Ruskins would find a wide public. I doubt if any of the editions published at that time showed a profit. Much money must have been sunk in them. Exactly why Ruskin should be out of favor, I must admit that I do not know. I was never a great Ruskinian, and this makes it hard for me to discover what has led to the defection of the faithful; but my recollection of Ruskin is that he was a very good writer, and that some of his books, with their enchanting titles, made particularly agreeable reading. I may confess that although I recollect well the circumstances in which I bought and read these books I do not now very clearly recall what the books were about. Perhaps this is what is wrong with the books, or with this generation. Perhaps there will be a revival in Ruskin. Perhaps they do not contain a great deal of grit. Now, for Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero-Worship" I have very little regard; but for

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several of his works, upon the other hand, I have the liveliest admiration. Ignoring for the moment his "Frederick the Great", and admitting that his handling of Cromwell's letters and speeches is unscrupulous, I think that its due should be given to Carlyle's "Life of Sterling". I should put this high not only among Carlyle's works but among the short biographies that I have read. The translations are admirable, and I for one shall never cease to be grateful for the specimens of Richter which they contain; while many of the essays are magnificent. The first time I read "Sartor Resartus" I was completely captivated by it. The book filled my head with dreams and ruminations. The last time I tried to read it I could not be bothered with the author's style. I fancy that Carlyle's style is too much for many modern readers, who find it a repulsive sort of pidgin English; while the stuff the style clothes is at present out of fashion. I have not mentioned "The French Revolution", for the reason that I have never read it. I used to know an old man who recited parts of it, and may for all I know have recited the whole of it; but as I never even handled the book what he recited, which was exciting and thunderous, may have been his own invention. I remember that when I was young I was taken for some forgotten reason to a dance at the abode of an Ethical Society. I had just seated myself, and was examining the rather pasty faced dancers who were onestepping gloomily about the room, when a tall, still pastier youth strode up to me, without introduction, and addressed me with these words: "Have you read 'The French Revolution'?" I rather vaguely said: "No", and my impression is that the conversation went no further. I think he murmured something, and withdrew. As for Swift, I hope the retiring bookseller is wrong. I should have imagined that "The Journal to Stella" still deservedly had readers. If I am wrong, I regret it. "Gulliver", which I reread last year, seems to me one of the great books of the eighteenth century, of English literature, and of all time. It is diabolically brilliant. But so is the "Tale of a Tub", and if that is no longer read we must indeed be neglecting our classics. I am not surprised to learn that Thackeray is unpopular nowadays. My wonder, however, is that "Esmond", the admired of all the quidnuncs, has no honorable mention in the bookseller's list. He mentions the two most amusing of Thackeray's longer books, and I think the best, but the omission of "Esmond" would a year or two ago have caused some heartburning. The tale of these declines may comfort the older writers of whom I have been speaking earlier; but I doubt if it will. The real interest of it is the light it casts upon our own tastes. I suppose I have read fairly widely in English literature; and I observe that it is now some years since I made any attempt to read any work by Ruskin, Carlyle, or Thackeray. But the same might be said of other writers of nineteenth century celebrity. Can it be that my case is that of large numbers of other people? What the bookseller says would appear to suggest this. If so, why is it? Is the time spirit against the reading of Victorian authors? Is it against the reading of classic English authors altogether? It would be particularly interesting to know. I certainly find a greater tendency among my friends to read modern authors, and I wonder whether this is really because we have a modern literature (in spite of all that has been said to the contrary) or whether it is due to the

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spread of the habit of reading snippets and the newspaper. It may be that we read solely for entertainment nowadays, or to be in the movement. Gone, in that event, is the zest for the classics which institutions such as the English Association exist to inculcate. By the way, the bookseller said, "Classical books are little in favour nowadays." I do not know whether he meant the classics of English literature, or whether he meant what a don would mean if he could be persuaded to make so blasphemous a remark. I do not imagine the bookseller meant the Greek and Latin classics. I think he meant what I have been talking about. Whatever he meant does not alter the degree of my curiosity as to the reading tastes of the modern human being. It would be interesting to know if the young are reading anything nowadays besides the "fashionable" writers.

* * * *

I am reminded by reference to the English Association of the lamentable death of Sir Sidney Lee. I cannot say that I ever knew Lee well, but it is a fact that we met and conversed upon several occasions. The first time, at dinner, we were unfortunately not introduced, our hostess supposing that we knew each other; but Lee was put immediately opposite me at table. The hostess said brightly to me, "Did you see Sir Sidney Lee's letter in the 'Times' today?" I (not knowing that he sat opposite) replied: "No. Was it any good?" and I feel that this remark weighed upon his mind whenever we met, for as far as I recollect he was never much more than monosyllabic to me thereafter. Upon one occasion he and I sat next to one another at an English Association dinner, and by some freak I was called upon to propose the toast of the Association, of whose aims I knew nothing. I did so, and by accident said the wrong thing all through my speech, with Lee shivering beside me, and at times looking up into my face with almost awestruck horror. It will be seen, therefore, how small was our friendship. Yet I never at any time knew this quiet, rather insignificant man to be otherwise than extremely kind, and extremely courteous. As to the quality of his work, I can say only that his Life of Edward the Seventh contained some of the most deplorable writing I ever read; but there can be no doubt that his chief claim to fame is the hard work he did for the Dictionary of National Biography. This was wooden, and commonplace; but it was adequate. The model upon which Lee worked and made others work was the baldest possible. To him "no flowers" was an habitual attitude of mind. And in a work of reference I think there can be no question that "no flowers" is a good model. Nevertheless, those who love a flower will miss flowers, and I recall very well the tremendous indignation of Thomas Seccombe when the best parts of his biography of George Meredith were struck out by Lee in his capacity as editor of the D. N. B. Seccombe was a flower lover, and was one of those who agree with Stevenson that the finest action is the better for a bit of purple. He came up against a rigidity in Lee which in an editor is no bad quality. The best quality, of course, is imagination, which implies taste, and also discrimination. This quality Lee wholly lacked, and some of his work is really a little on the serious side. It is not, however, pretentious, and for that at least he deserves credit.

SIMON PURE

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A STUDY IN SELF GLORIFICATION

By Joseph Collins

WHEN Diotima, a woman wise in love and many other things, was about to terminate that memorable interview from which flowed one of the most perfect — in form, if not in content — of all of Plato's works, she said to him: "I am persuaded that men do all things . . . in the hope of glorious fame. They run risks far greater than they would for their children, they spend money, undergo any sort of toil and even die for the sake of leaving behind them a name which shall be eternal."

Oftentimes, when communing with the Poverello of Assisi or reflecting upon his determinations and accomplishments, I have been convinced the Grecian woman was wrong. Now I shall never be able to think so again. The third volume of "The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page" convinced me she was right; and now the suave, silent, sagacious Colonel — to whom one day Texas will build a memorial that Houston will display — and his uncounseled, unwise biographer have confirmed it.

"The Intimate Papers of Colonel House" constitute, with one exception, the most unmodest document in any language of which I have reading command. The exception is the Memoirs of Germany's last Kaiser. I know the frankness of Pepys, the insensitiveness of Cellini, the shamelessness of Rousseau; I have familiarity with the autobiographic records of many who, having no reputation to lose, sought to gain one by narrating their accomplishments in devious fields and sinister streets. Despite this, I know of none that is so redolent of self appreciation, so reflective of self satisfaction, so replete with admission of accomplishment as these two volumes. The whole world admits that Colonel House played an important rôle in the world's last and greatest tragedy; that he trained and disciplined himself to play the rôle and that he played it well, at times brilliantly. Had he had proper support he would have played it with great aplomb to the end. He does not have to prove it. Lord Grey does it for him; so do Lord Oxford and Asquith, and Clemenceau and others too numerous to mention. Unquestionably Ray Stannard Baker will do it for him in his authorized Life of Woodrow Wilson. Admitting, however, that he had to prove it, anyone infinitely less astute and resourceful than Colonel House could have devised or hit upon a way to get it before the world in less egoistic tone, with less admission of mastery of men and dominion of events.

I am not now speaking of the merit of the book as stakes to which may be attached the scroll of history, and it is furthest from my intention to deny that it is a firm foundation upon which the historian who will write the story of the world from 1910 to 1920 must build. From the historical standpoint it is a precious document; from the standpoint of good taste it is a preposterous one. To friends and acquaintances the author has not se

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to be the kind of man who could perpetrate it. He appears to combine modesty and mastery so harmoniously that neither one is conspicuous, and he has prided himself on his reputation for silence. Now he is revealed as the most garrulous man of his time, who talked to a confidential secretary rather than to reporters.

A few years ago, when the limelight was constantly focused on the Colonel, Arthur D. Howden Smith wrote a book which he called "The Real Colonel House". Mr. Smith knew as much about the man from Texas as I know about Hammurabi.

Edward Mandell House has revealed himself, and Professor Charles Seymour of Yale University has thrown him into bold relief. His riddle has been published, his secrets broadcast. His consuming ambition was to play an influential, if not decisive, rôle in politics. He realized his ambition. He was the non-elected, coadjutor president of this country for five years. He sought accomplishment rather than notoriety. He got both; but his "Intimate Papers" are likely to give him more notoriety than it is good for anyone to have. Contemporaries and coworkers accord him great praise for his accomplishments, and it is a matter of profound regret that it was not left to them and to posterity, guided by his documents taken in conjunction with others that elicited or provoked them, to put an estimate upon his services to his country and to the western world. It has been admitted universally that he did self imposed and obligatory duties with alacrity, thoroughness, and self sacrifice; that he was discreet, diplomatic, and resourceful; that he was a galvanic battery that needed no recharging, and often a dynamo to a man who for a time was the world's most distinguished citizen and whom history may finally decide to call the genius of his time. It is also admitted that he comported himself with great dignity when his master and benefactor dealt him the blow that had put so many previous counselors and assistants out of the ring. These admissions should have generated in Colonel House the modesty nature had denied him.

On the twentieth of June, 1912, Mr. House wrote to Woodrow Wilson: "If you will permit me to act as your friend in an advisory capacity it will give me pleasure to use my every effort on your behalf." He had brought with him from his native state a deserved reputation for political sagacity, social adaptability, and personal trustworthiness. He had shown his skill and ability in assembling political machines and great discernment in picking men to run them; more than once he had demonstrated his efficiency as campaign manager. And he was a companionable, mild mannered, approachable, laconic man that a doubting Thomas would have believed and a second story man would have trusted. Wilson, who knew little about men, "fell" for him. It was love at first sight. "Never before", Mr. House wrote to his brother-in-law, "have I found both the man and the opportunity." He might have made the paraphrase complete by adding "the place" as well. His request was granted promptly, gracefully, gratefully. The Colonel set to work with military readiness; in fact, he began before he got permission. House had noted, reading Wilson's speeches of 1911, that he was not stressing the tariff. "I called his attention to this and told him I thought it was a mistake." On another and very critical occasion, while Wilson was a candidate for president, House said to him, "If I

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were you I would do nothing further for the present." Wilson had not as yet developed that adamantine unresponsiveness which fettered him during his second term, and not only did he admit that he was wrong but he promised not to act independently in the future. For a long time the Colonel refused to believe that promises are like pie crusts — made to be broken.

Colonel House rendered to Woodrow Wilson services of such merit and enormity that it would be difficult to overestimate their value. These services, as set forth by the Colonel's diary and Professor Seymour's comments, are, some of them, as follows:

He planned and engineered Wilson's nomination as twenty eighth president of the United States.

He got him in right with the people by persuading him to forego electioneering while Roosevelt was lying in the Mercy Hospital in Chicago with a bullet wound in his chest.

He prevented the first Wilson administration from being wrecked at the moment of victory by plumbing the human pillars of Wilson's organization.

He selected the President's Cabinet and his ambassadors.

He stood like an asbestos curtain between Wilson and the fire of criticism; he lightened his burdens by standing between him and greedy office seekers as the great wall of China stands between that country and invaders and marauders.

He told members of the Cabinet where to get on and where to get off the Ship of State and how to comport themselves while they were abroad. He provided the President with information concerning the question of Panama Canal tolls, he guided him to the successful formulation of the income tax provisions of the Tariff Act, and he assisted him to formulate and effect Currency Reform and the Federal Reserve System.

Naturally, some doubt enters the mind of the reader as to whether he did all this with the same completeness that "The Intimate Papers" seem to indicate. It is quite possible that a witness of a Round Table dinner at which the Panama tolls question was discussed by Mr. Root and Mr. Choate, while Woodrow Wilson listened attentively and silently, would conclude that the President got some enlightenment from that discussion. More than once I heard a certain ambassador narrate the steps of his selection as they had been revealed to him, and I do not recall that there was any mention of Colonel House. Despite this, "The Intimate Papers" impress one as fundamentally founded on fact, and we shall not know how much exaggeration or bias there is in them until all the arbiters of our destiny who were active during the years that the diaries cover have "confessed". Considering the rapidity with which these confessions are now coming, we shall not have to wait long.

His biographer says that Colonel House was not only a combination of Richelieu's Father Joseph and Thurlow Weed, but that he was very much more. In one respect he was like Alexander, he sighed for worlds to conquer. After he had straightened out our domestic matters and oriented those chosen to administer them, he turned to international affairs "for which he was peculiarly suited and in which he rendered his greatest services", and this is what he did:

He inoculated Woodrow Wilson with the germs of Foreign Policy, and he stood near him until he was convinced that the inoculation "took". He then went to Great Britain and applied soothing balsams and healing un-

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guents to the wounds of its people which had resulted from the Panama tolls fracas. He made a friend of Sir Edward Grey, the wisest and most far sighted statesman of Europe, and learned to understand and speak his language. This friendship prevented us from having a break with Great Britain when, through her Orders in Council the second year of the war, she was furnishing us with ample cause for a break.

By devising a plan for international cooperation, he nearly prevented the World War — at least a one hundred per cent German states that the Kaiser said so.

He nearly succeeded in making the nations at war call a halt, not once but twice.

He drafted Woodrow Wilson's speech of May 27, 1916, which one day may be considered to stand favorable comparison with Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

He suggested the League of Nations.

He planned, organized, and in a measure effected Wilson's second campaign, prophesied his election, and gave him confidence that he would win.

He helped Wilson keep us out of war, and he helped him get us in. It is possible that we had something to do with winning the war, though few of those whom we sought to assist seem willing to admit it today. If we did, Colonel House did his bit, and more.

No one is likely to deny that these constitute what is popularly called *some* accomplishment, but for the details of them and Colonel House's admission of their reality, we shall have to await volumes three and four.

Assuming that Colonel House did all the things that his diary and biographer claim that he did, why should his "Intimate Papers" make such unpleasant reading? It is not difficult to furnish the answer. Their publication at this time does not seem quite fair to Woodrow Wilson. Had they appeared simultaneously with the biography that is now being prepared by Mr. Baker, the unprejudiced reader would have opportunity to see the other side of the picture, hear the other side of the case. As it is now, we are asked to render a judgment after the plaintiff's case has been presented, and before the defendant has had opportunity to say anything—beyond such phrases as the plaintiff may characterize and interpret as he pleases. In other words, it does not look from where the reader sits as if the Colonel plays the game fairly. That may be the fault of the seat or the sitter.

Another reason is that the Colonel says things about himself that one should not say even though they be true. It is the tone that makes the music. I have no doubt that all the things he relates happened, but some of them he should not have told even to a confidential secretary. And if he did tell them, she should not have transcribed them. What does it avail us to know that Wilson's jaw became so firmly set when some member of the Cabinet "transgressed the proprieties" that the Attorney General noted it? It only makes us marvel that it is so difficult to housebreak Cabinet officers, while we wonder what propriety "X" transgressed. And what is the purpose of confiding to the world that Balfour said, after hearing House talk, "That is the most eloquent speech I have ever heard." The Colonel's comment was, "This, of course, was polite . . ." Obviously the dots mean, "but true".

Admitted that Colonel House was ringmaster of Woodrow Wilson's circus, why should we be deafened by the echo of the crack of the lash today? Nearly

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all of us have indolences and infirmities that even our friends should not tell the world. There must have been someone in Wilson's first Cabinet who knew his way about, who had initiative and vision, and who was unwilling to receive suggestions or take orders save from his chief; but no one would suspect it from this diary.

"Today was Cabinet day and I remained to meet the different members as they came in, for there was something I had to say to each. . . ." Those dots are very suggestive. Whether he had to reprove, to praise, or to counsel, it should have been easy for him to devise a more felicitious way of putting it. It is difficult to picture even such an amiable person as Secretary Lane raising his hand and saying, "Please, teacher, may I go out to California and get the LL.D. degree the University has offered me?" And how humiliated he must have felt when the reply was, "You ask your paw and do exactly as he tells you." Why make such entry in one's diary if the purpose is not to derogate Lane or exalt the diarist? It is even more difficult to picture Attorney General McReynolds taking such orders as, "We discussed a vacant Federal Judgeship and I *insisted* upon his making an immediate appointment." The word "insisted" does not fall so becomingly from the mouth of Colonel House as it does from that of Benito Mussolini or Primo de Rivera. However, there is something of the dictator in the Colonel. It must not be forgotten that Philip Dru, Administrator, whom he patterned after himself, became dictator in Washington and proceeded by ordinance to remake the mechanisms of the government, to reform the basic laws that determine the relation of the classes, to remodel the defensive forces of the Republic, and to bring about an international grouping or league of powers founded upon Anglo-Saxon solidarity.

A suspicion enters my mind that in reality Colonel House was for a time Dictator of these United States. Such entries as these in his diary would seem to indicate it: "The President and I began work on the Federal Reserve Board Appointments. I *insisted* that it was the most important legislative work that had been passed since the foundation of the Republic. . . ." Friends suggest, dictators insist. The President replied, "Dear friend, do not frighten me any more than I am now." Anyone who still harbors the belief that Wilson did not get inspiration as well as instruction from his "dear friend" will be promptly purged of it when he reads the Colonel's letter of November 30, 1914, and the diary entry of December 16 of the same year. Colonel House had conceived, or at least gestated, the League of Nations and he went to Washington to be delivered. The President was in attendance. "I could see", writes the diarist, "that it excited his enthusiasm. I suggested that he take a pencil and write the points to be covered. He did so and after he had written he said, 'Anything else?'" "I think that is sufficient", said the mentor. "Then I shall type it", said the President, which he did forthwith, "on his little typewriter". When he handed it to his *fons et origo boni* he expressed a fear that it might hurt Mr. Bryan's feelings were he to learn its origin, but the Colonel assured him that he could take care of the sensibilities of the Great Commoner. Indeed, he had learned some of his tactics from him, such as, "It is easier to kiss a thing through than to kick it through." Anyone who will read the address which Bryan prepared for the jury in the Scopes trial will

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recognize that Colonel House has full realization of the potency of praise. "I began the conversation by complimenting Naon [the Argentine Ambassador] upon the advanced thought in his country." Bryan began his speech by complimenting the jury upon their intelligence, tolerance, wisdom, and pulchritude. Before he had spoken five minutes he could have sold any member of the jury a lightning rod or a life insurance policy. Naon capitulated promptly.

One of the most conspicuous revelations of the diary is the self confidence of the author: he never asked the depth of the water or its temperature before he jumped in — that is, he never appeared to, but he had always measured it and thermometerized it before taking the plunge. When he went to London Mr. Page asked him to aid him in formulating some plan that would make Wilson's administration and his own notable in the annals of the Embassy. To his diary he confided that he would do so, for he had in mind something which would redound to the advantage of both countries. When one reads what Colonel House remarked on meeting Sir Edward Grey, that he had "no apparent sense of his own importance", it occurs to the reader that though they had some fundamental similarities they also had some distinguishing differences.

There are so many entries that testify the keen realization of the importance of his self imposed mission, that it would be idle to try to enumerate them. Most of them are gems and a few are Kohinoors. He made the conditions under which he would see the Kaiser! When one recalls that in May, 1914, Wilhelm II was unable to distinguish between himself and God, one must admit it took some nerve even for a Texan to say, "It must be a tête-à-tête or nothing." Equally priceless is the account of the interview. House held him spellbound. The Kaiserin tried to break in on them but without success; she sent one of her sons to tell them the royal train was waiting: William did not budge. "After forty minutes I had said all I cared to and was ready to leave myself. Therefore I stopped talking and was very quiet in order to indicate that I at least, was through." That is a far better way to bring an interview with a crowned head to an end than to say, "Well, king, I think we have had about enough of this." In the romances, Consuelo boasts of lessons she has given the nobles in manners, on the stage; in real life Talma taught Napoleon the arts of behavior; but it remained for a Texan of Dutch stock to lesson the last of the Kaisers.

It is easier to believe that he dominated the Kaiser than that he "silenced" a certain lady called some years ago by a British poet the woman with the serpent's tongue. There is something about her pronouncements and publications which lead me to believe that if she became silent when the Colonel said a few things to her she had some very good reason for her conduct, such as that it would redound to the advantage of an elderly husband who was then falling off the governmental machine, and off that other wagon from which no one in America now ever falls.

No comment on "The Intimate Papers" should neglect the author's intercourse with our European ambassadors. In the first place, he selected them, and one of them at least called him Master — his letters, by the way, are a closer approximation to what an ambassador's letters should be than any in these volumes. The letters of Walter H. Page to Colonel House are

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more revelatory of the man than many of those published in his own "Life and Letters", for they are not so obviously written for posterity. Many of them were written to blow off steam. The time has not yet come to estimate the value of the services rendered his country by our Ambassador to Great Britian during the war. It is far easier to estimate his services to the country to which he was accredited. These "Intimate Papers" would seem to indicate that neither the President nor Colonel House felt that he was up to his job. In truth, had it not been for Mr. Page and Sir Cecil Spring-Rice (temperamently unfitted by illness and indisposition), Colonel House might never have been given his roving commission. It may have been Wilson's one track mind that prevented him from believing more than one person. He didn't believe his ambassadors and he thought some of them were so biased that they could neither see straight nor recognize facts. He sent men to check them up, and the greatest of them was Colonel House. House did not confine his admonitions and orientations to our own ambassadors. He told Spring-Rice that he represented neither his chief nor his government, that his views were not their views, and that he knew of no official anywhere who was serving his country so badly; moreover, he would thank him not to speak to him again. The Colonel was a little out of hand when he said this, but Sir Cecil ate humble pie. He had been warned. Once before, the Colonel had *insisted* that he come to New York to meet Bernsdorff. Though Sir Cecil had said wild horses could not drag him here, he came just the same.

During the summer of 1915, Colonel House thought out a plan to compel peace. He submitted it to the President, who was at first startled, then enthusiastic, and finally convinced. The plan was that the nations at war should have a conference, and that if any of them proved not "reasonable" we should whip her, aided naturally by her enemies who had not succeeded in whipping her. The Colonel went to Europe in the last days of that year and talked to everyone who had any say in the matter, from kings to cardinals. After two months he returned home to tell the President his impressions and convictions and to submit a memorandum of Sir Edward Grey. The President read it, interpolated one all important word. The word was "probably". We would probably join forces with the Allies if the Central Powers were not reasonable. That word avoided the necessity of defining and agreeing upon "reasonableness". Certainly no one is fatuous enough to think that Germany at that time, when she seemed to be winning, would have thought it reasonable to cede Alsace-Lorraine, but France would have thought it a patency of reasonableness to demand it. Yet since neither Great Britian nor France wanted peace without victory, any more than they want disarmament now, House's odyssey was as complete a failure as Ford's.

Then came a most testing and sad period for the President. He saw all chances of ending the war by mediation disappear, and he despaired. It is at this point that "The Intimate Papers" begin to be more instructive and less irritating. The submarine policy of the Germans was driving Wilson to intervention, and the restrictions that the British were putting upon commerce continued to be a thorn in his side and a mote in the country's eye. The Wilson his countrymen knew now begins to appear in focus in Colonel House's autobiography. Under date of April 2, 1916,

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he notes, "The President's penchant for inaction makes him hesitate to take the plunge . . . his intimate entourage from the Secretary of State down are having an unhappy time. He is consulting none of them and they are as ignorant of his intentions as the man in the street. I believe he will follow the advice I gave him."

The notes of Colonel House's interviews with the Secretary of State, his letters to the President, his correspondence with von Bernsdorff, the communications with Sir Edward Grey, the comments on the Anglo-French reply, the records of his contacts with Sir William Wiseman and of his intimacies with British statesmen who really counted, are of the greatest value. His account of the genesis of the note which Wilson sent to the belligerents and neutrals in December, 1916, which Colonel House was confident would enrage the Allies, and of the momentous speech which the President made to the Senate, January 22, 1917, are interesting if true; and the film of the President's mind as he realized that the German Ambassador had to be given his passport and that his country, unprepared as it was, and for which he was responsible, had to be thrown into the European caldron, is instructive and illuminating.

"The Intimate Papers" now available to the public carry us through Wilson's second election and our entry into the war. It may be intemperate to say that they appear to show that Colonel House was instrumental in both, but truth compels the statement. They testify one great failure on the part of their author: he could not make the President prepare for war. The belief would seem to be gaining ground that had he done so, Wilson would in truth have kept us out of war.

Fortunate is the man upon whose life scroll is the record of but one failure. Colonel House is his own star, and apparently nothing fell to him early or too late. Nothing is sacred to him but the integrity of his own mind; he has absolved himself to himself, and it is probable that he will have, to a considerable degree, the suffrage of the world. Had he had as wise a counselor in the preparation of his diary as Wilson had in him, I doubt not that he would have had the suffrage of the whole world.

In one of his letters to the President, Colonel House says, "One continually hears self glorification and the highest motives attributed to themselves because of their part in the war." I cannot get these words out of my mind. I drive them out and before I can note their absence they are back again. I know these "Intimate Papers" are of great historical value, but was it for their historicity that they were put before twenty five million readers before their publication in book form?

In a prefatory note the author says, "As I see Woodrow Wilson in retrospect, his chief defect is temperamental." The Colonel's defect is in a far higher field of intelligence: in the field of rationalization and judgment.

It may be that an attack of literary biliousness induced by the onrush of memoirs and diaries from those who made the war, fought it and terminated it, leaves me with a bitter taste that has impregnated these comments. Colonel House's book is but one of scores, and with the exception of Lord Grey's "Twenty-Five Years" most of them are open to the criticism directed against "The Intimate Papers". They extol individuals — and in the war individuals did not give striking or startling accounts of themselves.

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THE NEW YORKER

A Delightful Comedy — A Flock of Failures — The Synthetic Underworld of Square Crooks — Life as the Irish Love it — When Heroes and Heroines and Villains Flourished — Modernism in the International Theatre Exposition

THE theatre like the stock market took a tumble during the month and reached, if not its lowest level, a very low level indeed. Also, as in the case of the market, advance notices bring news of brighter days ahead — but they are not yet. Among all the "Cats and Dogs" which have been exposed for sale to a suspicious public one play called "The Wisdom Tooth" stands high and alone upon a shining pinnacle. In this fantastic comedy Marc Connelly has wrought deftly and delicately — the more to his credit since his theme is an impossibly difficult one. It is a feat to impose a four dimensional plot on a three dimensional stage, but the author has done it. Consider the plot: A man, Bemis by name, suddenly is shocked into the realization that he has no mind, no courage, no integrity, that he is the butt of his office, the yes man of his boss, and an object of pity to his girl. Through the familiar medium of a dream the dead grandparents of Bemis appear and he is then carried back to his boyhood. There the man walks watching the boy he was. Later the memory of the boy accompanies the man into his present day world to inject into him some of the resolution which he no longer possesses, and by so doing wins back for him the girl he loves. That is a brief and awkward enough exposition of the story, but there is nothing awkward about the way it unfolds on the stage. The action is so consistent, so inevitable, that when the dead grandparents of Bemis appear their entrance seems completely logical; nor is there anything of wonderment in the sight of a man talking to the boy he was, or even acting as the man he might have been. Thomas Mitchell has been entrusted with the part of Bemis, and he plays it with delicacy and skill. We think of no other actor at the moment who could bring any more intelligence to the rôle. The rest of the cast is generally good. There has been a good deal of loose praise about "The Wisdom Tooth". "As whimsical as Barrie", people are saying. But it in no way resembles Barrie. Let the credit for a piece of work which is peculiarly his own remain with Marc Connelly.

It is useless to retail all the failures; some of them died almost immediately, some are still in the throes. We greeted these wholesale demises with dry eyes except in the case of "Nirvana" which was born, flourished feebly, and expired all in four days. On the ground of good play writing the infant did not deserve to live, but at least John Howard Lawson, whose "Processional" made somewhat of a stir a while ago, had an idea. The idea was that perhaps there is a new religion stirring which is to sweep us all back into an ecstatic faith, and the three acts were taken up in showing how badly we need it. If Mr. Lawson had

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spent more time on the religion and less on our need the play might have moved further, but he got sidetracked contemplating the results of drunkenness, the seven deadly sins, and a couple of perversions, so that when he came to the evening was over and the play a failure. We understand that John Dos Passos has also tried to lift himself to a more rarefied plane with his first play, "The Moon is a Gong", but we missed seeing it; from all accounts it is slightly madder than "Nirvana". Nevertheless, these men deserve credit. They are explorers — a bit ridiculous perhaps, but still explorers. They take their theatre seriously. Those who come after will reap the harvest where they broke the ground, but the credit will not be to those later ones.

Three producers gathered together to present "The Masque of Venice" in which Arnold Daly struggled gallantly for an act or so. Toward the end he chose to submit gracefully to the exigencies of an excessively wordy plot without further attempting to put it over, only casting a round and limpid eye at the audience as if bespeaking its indulgence and sympathy with his lot. Mr. Daly is too old a trouper to be upset seriously by this fiasco. And since the loss, if any, is divided among three producers we reserve all the sympathy lying around loose for ourself and those others who had to see this play. The Coburns, whose claim to fame may well rest on "The Better 'Ole", appeared in as dreary a little comedy as we have ever witnessed, called "The Right Age to Marry". They disappeared soon after, taking their comedy with them. Whether the provinces are to be edified we cannot say. For the third bill of their second subscription season the stagers offered a revival — "The Unchastened Woman" by Louis K. Anspacher. With a certain meanness this play was billed as a modern American comedy, and no mention was made of its having seen service in days gone by; nevertheless it must have been apparent to all concerned after the first five minutes that it had been dug out of somebody's trunk and inadequately dusted off for the emergency. The creases were still in it and the smell of camphor lingered. Violet Kemble Cooper, Rita Romilly, and Morgan Farley played listlessly, as if conscious how dated their wares were, and Josephine Hutchinson, whose acting in "A Man's Man" earlier in the season was notable, was pretty well suppressed during the first two acts. She may have finished up with a fine glow in the last, but by then we were well on our way uptown, vowing to see no more revivals with the exception of Ibsen.

"Square Crooks" cheered us a little. Our visits to the underworld have not been extensive, but we are convinced that life was never like that. We took pleasure in forecasting what the action would be and our score of correct guesses was enormous. We even knew that the pearls would be hidden in the carpet sweeper which stood conspicuously in a corner of the set, but we did not know who took them out. Nobody else did either. That detail was never divulged, and presently in the charge and counter charge of the play it became unimportant. We were fascinated by one of the actresses whose stage name was Bridget O'Rourke. The brogue with which she garlanded her lines was incredible, and it needed only a casual study of her face to convince us that she had not been born in Dublin. Such a bit of miscasting puzzled us until suddenly the answer dawned. This was evidently the daughter of Abie's Irish Rose, on the stage like her mother, continuing a great

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tradition. Since the hero of the piece conspicuously read one of our defunct novels during the first act, we should like very much to say something really cordial about "Square Crooks". But we can't find anything to say except that we rather enjoyed the hokum and that it was refreshing to hear the cast shouting their lines with such heartiness. If noise counted for anything, this play would still be running a year from now.

A young Irishman, Sean O'Casey by name, stirred up a deal of excitement for himself and some trouble by writing a play called "Juno and the Paycock". It had a stormy career in Dublin, but subsequently London took it to its heart, where it is still cherished. That accolade bestowed, it was inevitable that we should see it here, and so three producers combined — such being the fashion lately — to give it to us. The name of this piece is pretty; the theme isn't. It tells about the horrors of life in Ireland during the Republican movement, but whether the English or the Irish are responsible for these is not clear. At any rate the play concerns the household of one Jack Boyle and the sordid clutter in which they all live. What with Irish whisky, breakdowns, and ballads, one thing leads to another until presently the family fortune vanishes, a daughter is betrayed, and a couple of young men are shot by somebody. Only a Russian or an Irishman could so pile on the horrors and keep a straight face. These tragic deaths gave each mother concerned the opportunity to advance firmly to the footlights and deliver herself of a speech beginning, "What were me pains in bringin' him into the world compared with me pains in takin' him out of it?" The rest of the cast, at attention and Eyes Right, listened respectfully to this funeral oration. It

THE DRAMA SHELF

"Three Plays by David Garrick" edited by Elizabeth P. Stein (Rudge). Recently discovered manuscript given exquisite format by the master printer.

"Roderigo of Bivar" by T. Sturge Moore (Rudge). This literary curiosity printed with great taste and beauty.

"Representative Plays" by J. M. Barrie (Scribner). A text edition containing six plays, which is most useful and more presentable as a book than most texts.

"The Great God Brown; The Fountain; The Moon of the Caribbees; and Six Other Plays of the Sea" by Eugene O'Neill (Boni, Liveright). A volume continuing the important works of Mr. O'Neill and containing the one act sea plays which are among his very best products.

"Easy Virtue" by Noel Coward (Harper). One of Mr. Coward's suave and startling dramas of modern life as seen by the nervous.

"The Eumenides of Æschylus" translated by Gilbert Murray (Oxford). The scholar's translation in useful text.

"The Poor Nut" by J. C. Nugent and Elliott Nugent (French). This famous college comedy offers the character of John Miller to the world.

"Plays, Sixth Series" by John Galsworthy (Scribner). Certainly not his best plays, but they must be in any dramatic library.

"Puppet Plays"; "Rocking Chairs"; "There's a Moon Tonight" by Alfred Kreymborg (French). Two volumes of one act plays, and the last a three act comedy. A peculiar quality of magic is present in all Kreymborg's dramatic work. It is practical, too, and makes for excellent amateur production. Of the "Puppet Plays", "Lima Beans" and "Manikin and Minikin" are also published separately.

"So That's That" by John V. A. Weaver (Appleton). A one act play depicting the rebellion of the younger generation in Mr. Weaver's felicitous "American" verse.

"Riches" by Gilbert Emery (Appleton). The oil boom furnishes material for a sketch of dingy boarding house life.

"Brains" by Martin Flavin (French). Grim slices of life in the form of six effective playlets.

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would have been funny if it had not been boring. A considerable cast headed by Augustin Duncan gallumphed through the piece with a variety of accents that would have startled the playwright could he have heard them. We have been fooled before by plays that try to prove something, but we go right ahead in our innocence being caught.

After this exposition of the weaklings it is a relief to turn to the revival of "East Lynne" by the Provincetown Players. We had never seen this standard of the Seventies and the Eighties, although we were almost a schoolboy when years later it was last shown in New York, and so we sat through the three acts and innumerable scenes with complete fascination. The play is a wow. Those were the days when a plot was a plot, full bodied, husky, with no sign of anæmia. There is no doubt of it. The theatregoer who paid his dollar could be assured of his money's worth in variety. In "East Lynne" there are an elopement and a seduction, a murder, an arrest, two deathbed scenes, and a baker's dozen of births. In fact the characters in "East Lynne" are among the most prolific we have ever come across. The Provincetown Players are burlesquing the classic, but the lines would still be funny even though they had not turned to the family album for inspiration in dress and gesture. If our startled ears did not deceive us we heard such lines as "Au revoir, but not adieu", and "Villain, I am still Lord Mount Severn's daughter!" On the whole, it is amazing that we have abjured in so short a time the false values and nasty-nice attitudes of the period when Victoria ruled and set the fashion in sentimentality. "East Lynne" is worth seeing if only to remind us from what we have escaped.

It is the duty of every playwright and producer to visit the International Theatre Exposition in the interest of his art. In fact, anybody who cares about the theatre would be well repaid for his trouble. In this exposition, which is presented under the auspices of the Theatre Guild, the Provincetown Playhouse, the Greenwich Village Theatre, and the Neighborhood Playhouse, the latest tendencies in stage setting, costuming, and directing are shown. Even such far off countries as Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia are represented.

What the modernists in the drama are doing is somewhat startling when one examines their little stage models composed of cubistic circles and bands, odd geometric forms, and series of levels. "Constructivist" is a word that concerns them greatly; some of them are preparing to abolish all actors as being the least considerable part of the spectacle. Take Kiesler of Vienna for example: "Inventor of the 'Optophon', 'Theatre-in-Space' and the Aerial City. . . . His auto-Theatre is set in a theatre hollow, no stage, no actors, a mechanical symphony of colours, lights, music, movement of volumes, utmost precision is had because all is worked by electrical switchboard. . . . Inventor of the 'Space-Stage', the four-dimensional stage in the middle of the auditorium."

If anybody thinks that these are fantasies of the distant future, let him remember back as far as "The Rose of the Rancho" with its cardboard effects and then consider "Goat Song" or "Adam Solitaire". He will realize how modernism has taken possession of the theatre. Cézanne and Gaugin were once radical painters — Léger and Chagall will be accepted tomorrow.

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THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Retail Bookseller", and* THE BOOKMAN'S *"Monthly Score". Such books as the editor specially recommends are marked with a star.*

GLORIOUS APOLLO — E. Barrington — *Dodd, Mead.* The Byronic gesture again preserved fictionally.

THE WHOLE STORY — Elizabeth Bibesco — *Putnam.* Subtle stories about smart people.

THE LADY OF THE ABBEY — George A. Birmingham — *Bobbs-Merrill.* The rollicking tale of a mad abbess who perverts a small revolution to her own ends.

* POSSESSION—Louis Bromfield—*Stokes.* The life story of an ambitious woman, with a rich bestowal of character portraits.

* SPRING RUNNING — F. W. Bronson — *Doran.* A glamourous narrative of struggling youth of the postwar generation variety.

EAGER VINES — Bonnie Busch — *Watt.* A bird in a gilded cage finds release through the adoption of an orphan asylum.

* THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE — Willa Cather — *Knopf.* The study of a man's attempt to readjust to changing middle life.

CARIB GOLD — Ellery H. Clark — *Bobbs-Merrill.* Piracy, love, and buried treasure all crammed into one swiftly told tale.

OCHILTREE WALLS — W. Irvine Cummings — *McBride.* The fine old Roberts family peters out among the woods, waters, and other beverages of Maine.

THE CHIP AND THE BLOCK — E. M. Delafield — *Harper.* A witty and otherwise distinguished study of temperament in an artistic English family, the head of which is an amusing novelist, poseur, and egotist.

A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY — Ethel M. Dell — *Putnam.* Mystery of heart and hand give this lady author her chance to unwind romantic threads.

MANHATTAN TRANSFER — John Dos Passos — *Harper.* A set of neurotics performing in the home town of neuroticism.

* AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY — Theodore Dreiser — *Boni, Liveright.* With painstaking care the realist builds up his amazing structure of character strength and weakness.

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HELEN OF TROY — John Erskine — *Bobbs-Merrill.* A discussion of morals and of life most entertainingly made ancient by giving the intensely modern characters Homeric pseudonyms.

COMES THE BLIND FURY — Raymond Escholier — *Dodd, Mead.* A convincing tragedy of wantonness in the blood that will not be denied, and the havoc wrought thereby in a French household.

THE HIGH ADVENTURE — Jeffery Farnol — *Little, Brown.* Another golden roadway romance, in which Jeremy finds much that troubles and pleases along the way.

* ALL THE SAD YOUNG MEN — F. Scott Fitzgerald — *Scribner.* Brilliant sketches of modern young men and women in scenes domestic and otherwise. (*See page 348.*)

THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL — J. S. Fletcher — *Doran.* Mr. Fletcher in Yorkshire shows the devasting power of greed.

THE SHANTY SLED — Hulbert Footner — *Doran.* A human tale of the far north and a girl whose love persisted.

LANDSCAPE WITH FIGURES — Ronald Fraser — *Boni, Liveright.* A most attractive blend of Chinese mysticism, Anglo-Saxon impudence, and beautiful prose.

THE PUZZLE LOCK — R. Austin Freeman — *Dodd, Mead.* Dr. Thorndyke's success in picking up the tiniest of clues is fascinating as always.

JOANNA — H. L. Gates — *Barse, Hopkins.* A new kind of flapper put on display.

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GIFTS OF SHEBA — W. L. George — *Putnam.* Mr. George dissects the ultra-modern woman, particularly in relation to her men, in his usual competent manner.

* SOUNDINGS — A. Hamilton Gibbs — *Little, Brown.* Several kinds of love explained in terms of the war and after.

* UNCHANGING QUEST — Philip Gibbs — *Doran.* A fine story told against the rich panorama of Europe's disorganization.

IF TODAY HAVE NO TOMORROW — Olive Gilbreath — *Dutton.* Russian aristocracy in its death throes is shown with horrifying vividness.

GLASS HOUSES — Eleanor Gizycka — *Minton, Balch.* Poor, weak human nature gets a thorough trouncing in this satire on Washington society.

THE VANISHING AMERICAN — Zane Grey — *Harper.* The Indian and his contact with white men made heroic in a parable filled with western atmosphere.

THE HOUSE — Grace Kellogg Griffith — *Penn.* Does a touch of genius unfit a woman for family life? This girl thought so.

* APPASSIONATA — Fannie Hurst — *Knopf.* A heroine who cannot escape religion for love.

ONE INCREASING PURPOSE — A. S. M. Hutchinson — *Little, Brown.* The most successful preachment in fiction for some years.

THE GOLD POINT — Charles Loring Jackson — *Stratford.* Fascinatingly gruesome stories of wildly impossible happenings.

RODOMONT — H. Bedford Jones — *Putnam.* Wonderful Mont St. Michel is the scene of a stirring romance of the time of Louis XIV.

* THE CONSTANT NYMPH — Margaret Kennedy — *Doubleday, Page.* Margaret Kennedy with her brilliant style took temperament and made it baffling and attractive.

WITH OR WITHOUT — Fanny Heaslip Lea — *Dodd, Mead.* Consisting mostly of such snappy backchat as serves to cover up the absence of other normal ingredients of a novel.

THE LOVE GAME — Suzanne Lenglen — *Adelphi.* A sugary sweet novel that shows none of the dash and brilliance which won the author's tennis championship.

THE FLYING EMERALD — Ethelreda Lewis — *Doran.* Romance in South Africa.

GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES — Anita Loos — *Boni, Liveright.* Revelations of a most disarming "gold digger".

CHILD OF THE WILD — Edison Marshall — *Cosmopolitan.* A story of a little boy and his later life — in distant Alaska.

HEARTS OF HICKORY — John Trotwood Moore — *Cokesbury.* Andrew Jackson and his sentimental period in a costume romance of sorts.

* THUNDER ON THE LEFT — Christopher Morley — *Doubleday, Page.* The process of growing up explained in fine fantasy.

SOOKEY — Douglas Newton — *Dodd, Mead.* The rise of a daughter of the London slums; its best feature is the delineation of the modes and manners of these slums.

THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1925 — Edward J. O'Brien — *Small, Maynard.* The usual collection of unusual tales.

SHEPHERDS — Marie Conway Oemler — *Century.* Sentiment for the sentimental in the harmless chronicles of a clerical family, mostly children.

* CLARA BARRON — Harvey O'Higgins — *Harper.* A character study of a woman that is penetrating and absorbing.

* THE GOLDEN BEAST — E. Phillips Oppenheim — *Little, Brown.* The mystery of complete disappearance explained in one of the best of this writer's fantastic modern fairy stories.

* WILD GEESE — Martha Ostenso — *Dodd, Mead.* Farm violence portrayed by a young lady, with the appearance of realism.

THE PERENNIAL BACHELOR — Anne Parrish — *Harper.* Atmospheric background well done, and the story of women's devotion has undoubted appeal.

CYNTHIA CODENTRY — Ernest Pascal — *Brentano.* A study of American girlhood which makes us wonder if all American girls are like that.

GEORGE WESTOVER — Eden Phillpotts — *Macmillan.* With his usual skill Mr. Phillpotts has described the declining years of a real Victorian survival.

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UP HILL AND DOWN DALE — Eden Phillpotts — *Macmillan.* There's an appeal in the quiet, homely humor of these Devonshire stories.

THE KEEPER OF THE BEES — Gene Stratton-Porter — *Doubleday, Page.* The traits of men and bees shown in a romance of home making.

THE SON OF THE HOUSE — Anthony Pryde — *Dodd, Mead.* Two young men return from South America to find adventure in England. Melodrama not too insistently lurid.

KNEEL TO THE PRETTIEST — Berta Ruck — *Dodd, Mead.* An airy trifle in which a young man goes abroad in search of love and finds it on his hearthstone.

THE LION'S SKIN — Rafael Sabatini — *Houghton Mifflin.* A young man, born in France, sets forth in life determined to kill his father — but much else happens.

* KELLER'S ANNA RUTH — Elsie Singmaster — *Houghton Mifflin.* Simple and beautifully written story of Pennsylvania life. (*See page 350.*)

THE BIG HOUSE OF INVER — E. Œ. Somerville and Martin Ross — *Doubleday, Page.* The efforts of the one conservative member of a roistering Irish family to stay its ruin arouse in the reader a sense of helpless pity.

CHILDREN OF THE TWILIGHT — Emma-Lindsay Squier — *Cosmopolitan.* Indian folk tales dressed for popular consumption.

* WOMEN — Booth Tarkington — *Doubleday, Page.* Very funny — but not all the ladies like this novelist's genial portraits of club talent.

RIDERS OF THE WIND — Elswyth Thane — *Stokes.* Love and romance are told with vigor and picturesqueness by this new author.

THE HOUNDS OF SPRING — Sylvia Thompson — *Little, Brown.* More war generation problems of love with European setting.

THE BLIND GODDESS — Arthur Train — *Scribner.* Our law courts form the backdrop for a story by this lawyer turned novelist.

* PORTRAIT OF A MAN WITH RED HAIR — Hugh Walpole — *Doran.* The mysticism of rural England combines with a rare adventure story to make highly exciting reading.

UPROOTED — Brand Whitlock — *Appleton.* Americans in Europe furnish interesting material for a novel of many character portraits.

TRIUMPH — John Wiley — *Minton, Balch.* New England and New York are in contrast with excellent and occasionally ironical effect.

ROUGHLY SPEAKING — H. C. Witwer — *Putnam.* Fun and pun abound in these slangy stories by a laughing philosopher.

HE RATHER ENJOYED IT — P. G. Wodehouse — *Doran.* Ukridge blunders through a delightful series of inconsequential episodes.

BEAU GESTE — Percival C. Wren — *Stokes.* This far flung adventure mystery is highly popular still.

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS —

BOOKS THAT MAY HAVE ESCAPED YOU

1. "The Pit" by Frank Norris. Interesting to compare it with his brother's "Pig Iron".

2. "The Little Beloved" by W. L. George. A charming novel of French and English by the late writer that far surpasses much of his later, better known work.

3. "Once Aboard the Lugger" by A. S. M. Hutchinson. This whimsy is a far cry from "One Increasing Purpose".

4. "The Jessamy Bride" by F. Frankfort Moore. A thirtieth anniversary edition with an introduction by Christopher Morley has just been issued by Duffield.

5. "Futility" by William Gerhardi. Convincing Russian atmosphere by a non-Russian fictionist.

Change and Decay

A BOOK which is as journalistic — in the best sense — as can be imagined, and as interesting to have on the table and dip into as any volume of reminiscenses recently concocted, is Mark Sullivan's "Our Times" (Scribner). Here we see how we behaved at the beginning of the present century. We are called to task for our peculiarities of a few years ago which, unless we think of them, do not seem peculiar. We see our clothes and our vehicles, we rehearse political moods which seemed fiery indeed then, and seem like pale echoes now. Mr. Sullivan has culled a rich store of anecdotes and a most amusing set of pictures to illumine his pages. We are treated to discussions of the World's Fair, the Gibson Girl, and Weber and Fields. We hear much of the approach of the automobile. It is a vastly entertaining book, because it is a cross section of all of life in America in a period when we were beginning to awake more and more to ourselves as conscious Americans. Just how homely and inclusive Mr. Sullivan is, I think you will gather from the following quotation. Every phase of life is important to him, as indeed it is to most human beings:

> The farmer's wife, too, was still largely independent of the distant cannery. "Preserving" was a household rite that followed the season from strawberry-time through raspberries to blackberries and on to peaches and pears. In the fall, as one drove along the country roads, one sniffed the agreeable scent of drying fruit, and on lean-to roofs saw frames in which the sliced apples were drying in the autumn sun. In October or November apple-sauce making was an event like butchering day. Apple-butter making involved, for some of the household, or for relays of them, a romantic night in the open. The apples, pared and sliced, together with cider, were put into a large copper-lined pot that hung on a frame over an outdoor fire. The fire had to be kept going as much as forty-eight hours, and some one had steadily to keep the mixture moving with a long-handled wooden stirrer specially made for this work.

The Best of His Time

AS F. Scott Fitzgerald continues to publish books, it becomes apparent that he is head and shoulders better than any writer of his generation. "All the Sad Young Men" (Scribner) contains several stories of compelling fineness, along with more conventional pieces of story telling that are sufficiently amusing with the old Fitzgerald talent. Fitzgerald knows his men and women with appalling clarity. He knows their *nerves*. He can write of strained and taut moods in which he

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sees men and women being caught and broken, without making his personages seem different from those about us. He treats the abnormal psychology of the war generation with a cynicism that has in it a touch of wisdom and love almost godlike in its detachment. While he sees and pities, he loves his characters. A youth like Dexter in "Winter Dreams" is quite unlike any other character I can think of in modern fiction, yet one so universal that we can count up dozens of him on our fingers. In "Absolution", wherein is the mystic quality that floods Fitzgerald's work every now and then with colors of poetry and dream, he has given us, I think, very nearly his best work.

There was a time when people were saying that Fitzgerald would never be able to write of anyone but his flappers. It really doesn't matter. Had he written only of flappers he would have done it so superbly that he need never have done anything else. His clarity of vision is amazing in its rightness, and then in the impudence and grace with which its possessor dares to carry it into his prose. Few people have ever written who could create so suddenly and so completely social atmosphere. You have not to read many paragraphs of a Fitzgerald story before he has told you somehow just what sort of room, what sort of clothes, what sort of accent to expect. He has his old gusto, and he has a sadness and a wisdom that grows with the years. The last thing in the world I should like to do would be to drive any of his public away from him by making him seem unduly important. He is, I think, a most important writer; but that does not stop him from writing such gay, foolish, thoroughly readable yarns as "Rags Martin-Jones" or "The Baby Party". He will always entertain, because the fact of entertainment is a serious one to him, and eminently worthwhile. "All the Sad Young Men" is, it seems to me, by far the best book of short stories he has given us, and it contains some of his very best work.

Current Thought Waves

THE culling of essays from the current magazines might be a task which would bore some men, but Odell Shepard has done a complete and an interesting job in editing his anthology, "Essays of 1925" (Edwin Valentine Mitchell). It is a book which has much good writing and a lot of material capable of causing discussion. Some of the authors are well known, others not so heralded. I should recommend this volume to anyone who wants a picture of the current in thought and manner.

Turning from things of the moment, you might then pick up the charming, thoroughly quaint and exquisitely phrased "Four Tales by Zélide" (Scribner). It is the same Madame de Charrière known to us now by that beautiful biography, "Portrait of Zélide". She spins her romances with a sly and knowing air, yet they are as fragile as china and as graceful as the dances she probably danced. Suppose we should turn back upon ourselves, and the lady fictionists of today should write more in this manner; who would read them, I wonder? Perhaps only the men, longing for another day when women were less something or other, and more something or other — only the poor men don't know what it is they want them to be or not to be, I find as a rule. Meanwhile fiction becomes more and more daring and

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less and less graceful. If you want an unusual tonic, find it in these slender and magic little tales.

From Pennsylvania Soil

THE growing list of Elsie Singmaster's novels and books of short stories makes us more and more conscious of an art sure and well founded, of a writer in America whose praise has not been loudly and blatantly sung but who must eventually be considered as one of our finest writers of prose tales. She has made the simple and picturesque folk of her native Pennsylvania serve as her characters, and with beauty and strength is preserving one of the most unusual communities in all America for our literary annals.

"Keller's Anna Ruth" (Houghton Mifflin) is a simple, delicately woven love story. Its main characters are drawn with minute strokes and move inevitably to conclusions which, if not highly original, seem plausible. Keller is a man who bends his entire family to his will and selfishness. Tragedy results for them all, with the exception of Anna Ruth who seems to have inherited her father's hardness of purpose, but with the saving grace of sweetness. With great skill Miss Singmaster has woven her tragedy for a predestined happy ending, and the resulting story is one which has all the elements of light popular fiction yet is treated with high artistry.

The Pennsylvania peasant is so unlike, in manner and life, to any other peasant class I happen to know of in the country, that Miss Singmaster's work becomes doubly important. Her stories not only are excellent reading but they show us these quiet, determined, somewhat stolid folk, with their curiously other world background. There is shrewdness of a sort; but it has nothing in common with that of New England. It is a Teutonic determination, a level glance at the values of life which, while it is often a sign of sanity, yet occasionally, as in the case of Keller, conceals beneath its appearance of simplicity and balance the raging of a fine or a terrible fever even of the quality of madness. "Keller's Anna Ruth" is a highly interesting novel. If you want to study this section of our country you should read, not only this story, but others of Miss Singmaster's exquisitely proportioned tales.

This Spring Lute

ONE of the most striking books of poetry to come from a woman in a long time is "Not Poppy" (Harcourt, Brace) by Virginia Moore. It is a difficult book for me to review because, although I think it is fine verse, and that Miss Moore's talent is indubitable, I dislike it as heartily as any volume of any sort I have run across in some time. This mood which the poet gives us is a shrill one. It is a disturbed, egotistical, strident, febrile woman's soul she pictures, and one which, while it is striking, is most annoying. No poem is entirely without the note I mean. Certainly nothing of the poppy here. Miss Moore is wide awake, alert to every emotion, ready to accent every emotion. What an amazingly uncomfortable personality! By this I do not mean anything at all about Miss Moore herself, whom I do not recall having met. Yet I know of no way in which to discuss such highly personal poetry without being personal. She will go far as a poet. She has genius,

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I think. In the line of women poets where stand Elinor Wylie, Edna Millay, and several others, she will be like a scarlet slippered, restless clog dancer. Most interesting, certainly.

Violently contrasted is Edward Davison's "Harvest of Youth" (Harper). Here are dignified measures and mellow lines, thoughts of beauty and of quiet passion, of English countryside and of discreet love. Mr. Davison is rapidly becoming well known in America as one who writes and talks charmingly of his native literature, and also of our own. His poetry emphasizes this charm and this erudition. Much of its cadence strikes the ear as conventional; but it is also lovely, and when he has something important to say it is rather more than that. Few modern poets would dare to write so definitely old fashioned a poem as "O Hand Unseen". Yet it is exquisite in feeling and in execution. I quote its first verse:

O Hand Unseen be gentle and kind to me,
  Touch me in desperate hour
When I forget thy guidance; though I be
  Impatient of thy power
Yet doth my heart elect
To turn along the way thou dost direct
  To meet the ultimate end,
  Content on thee, thee only, to depend.

Stoddard King's "What the Queen Said" (Doran) is still another mood, and a gay, reckless, joyous one it is. There are few writers of light verse in America who can equal Mr. King for the turn of the phrase, the lilt of the line. This is a volume which will be quoted from for years, and it marks the entrance into the book world of a man who is likely to go a long way in the annals of American humor and versifying. I can think of no pleasanter book to have about one in the spring than this collection of lyrics nonsensical and otherwise. It is tonic. It is laugh provoking. It has humility as well as satire. Stoddard King has, I believe, a real genius for fun.

— *J. F.*

SCARS

By Garreta Busey

THERE is a deep serenity in homely things —
  Wood dark with age and scarred with daily wear;
In rough coats wet with rain, in steaming muddy shoes,
  Or faces marked with old forgotten care.

They have the strong plain breath of earthiness about them.
  Their feel is like the coarse black bark of trees
That stand deep planted in the loam, that knew through ages
  The crackling storm or sunlit drone of bees.

Great souls there are who leap to flaming beauty
  In timeless, wind swept realms behind the stars,
But he may know, who walks in homely places,
  The intimate serenity of scars.

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

THE WIDOW OF WINDSOR

By Allan Nevins

"WITH what a heavy broken heart I enter on a new year without him!" — these are the words from Queen Victoria's journal which open the two volumes of her "Letters", 1862–1878, edited by George Earle Buckle. They cover the first sixteen years of her widowhood; the years of the American Civil War, the Austro-Prussian War, and the Franco-German War; the first prime ministry of Gladstone and the first two of Disraeli. It was a period in which the Queen, sorely stricken by Albert's death, retired from society and showed such a distaste for state appearances — refusing to open Parliament, and staying at Osborne or Balmoral instead of Buckingham Palace — that English opinion expressed considerable censure. "I sometimes wish I could throw up everything and retire into private life; it is all so *hateful* to me without the interest my Angel gave it", she bursts out. But these letters show her struggling conscientiously with national problems, overworking to the peril of her health, and bringing a deal of shrewd sense to the study of European affairs. Previously the Prince Consort had relieved her of many duties; now she lifted the burden alone.

The highest peaks of the correspondence, in significance and interest, are found among the letters on foreign affairs. The overthrow of the Third Empire, which cost Victoria no grief, and the rise of a united Germany, posed problems which the Queen understood as well as anybody. She loved Germany and said emphatically that England would always want Germany powerful. Her husband had been a German; her daughter was to be the next empress of Germany. But it is striking to see how instinctively she detested Bismarck, and how well she gauged certain dangerous traits in the German character. "Bismarck is so overbearing, violent, grasping, and unprincipled", she wrote in 1875, "that no one can stand it." And she added in the same letter to the German crown princess: "You know the Prussians are not popular unfortunately, and no one will tolerate any Power wishing to dictate to all Europe. This country, with the greatest wish to go hand in hand with Germany, cannot and WILL *not stand it!*" A very spirited outburst!

And the good Queen had her apprehensive prevision in another quarter. She loved her grandson, "dear little William, who has that misfortune with his poor little left arm" — the future Kaiser. But she expressed solicitude that he should become "good, clever, and liberal minded", and should "not grow up into a conceited Prussian".

The Queen's contacts with her ministers were anything but perfunctory and ineffective. It is well known that her differences with Palmerston in the early Fifties had forced his resignation. When he died (1865) the Queen wrote King Leopold with the utmost frankness about him. He had "many valuable qualities"; in many ways he was a great loss; but we "had terrible trouble with him about foreign affairs"; and "I never liked

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him, or could ever the least respect him, nor could I forget his conduct on certain occasions to my Angel". Lord John Russell at his death was also characterized in tart fashion: "He was impulsive, very selfish, vain, and often reckless and imprudent". The Queen had a mind of her own on public affairs. It was at her direct intervention that Luxembourg was neutralized, and she more than once demanded that this or that bill be carried through. The numerous letters from or to Gladstone and Disraeli exhibit the contrast between their attitudes, Disraeli believing the final decision on matters of policy lay with the sovereign, Gladstone expecting her to be guided implicitly by his counsel. With a mixture of loyalty and gallantry, Disraeli sometimes laid on thick his flattery of "the ineffable charm" of the Queen; but the letters of Gladstone are formal and business-like, quite in keeping with the manner which led the Queen to say that he spoke to her as if she were a public meeting.

In the correspondence of a private nature the most amusing and appealing letters are those exchanged between the Queen and the Prince of Wales. The volumes open with his marriage to Alexandra, of which the Queen gives an engagingly maternal account. "Bertie", we are told, "looked pale and nervous." The Queen, in deep mourning, watched them drive away from the Castle, and reflected: "It was so like *our* driving away twenty-three years ago to Windsor, amidst the same crowds and shouts of joy." But poor Bertie, the future Edward VII, appears usually in an unhappy light. He was forbidden the honorary colonelcy of a Russian regiment which he coveted. He was given severe annual "jobations" by the Queen on his love for racing, and plaintively begged her that "whatever ill-natured stories you may hear about me, I trust you will never withdraw your confidence from me till facts are proved against me". He never went to the small tracks, he protested, but only to Epsom, Ascot, and Goodwood. The poor prince repeatedly asked for "some useful employment", and when Gladstone's plan for making him Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was pronounced undesirable, he wished some alternative. But we find his request in 1864 that he might be allowed to see the dispatch boxes as training for his future kingship brusquely refused by the Queen.

Less and less frequently does the Queen come back to her private grief; to her lamentation that "now *all* that bright, happy time is past, and I am alone, a poor unhappy widow! The *Cross* is our badge, and we must *wear it bravely!*" We see her an industrious and conscientious public servant; a ruler who, if never brilliant, had a plenitude of hard common sense; a woman with simple tastes but a wide variety of interests; and above all a person of very firm convictions. These qualities, and the vastness of the issues she touched, give her letters a surprising degree of color and interest.

The Letters of Queen Victoria, Second Series. Edited by George Earle Buckle. Two volumes. Longmans, Green and Company.

THINGS MILITARY

By Thomas Boyd

"WARRIORS in Undress" by F. J. Hudleston has the air of having been written by some college professor who is out on a literary lark. The book is composed of a number of

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sketches of military personages of bygone days: the Duke of Wellington; Frederick Augustus, Duke of York; Garibaldi and Baron von Steuben. There is at least one footnote to every page, and an obscure reference and a literary allusion to every paragraph. Mr. Hudleston writes in a crackling, flurried prose of which the following is a fair sample:

> Putnam, a name still well known in the United States, though it has, I think, died out in England, when a quiet farmer at Pomfret — a pleasant rustic name if you do not pronounce it Pontefract — exasperated by a wolf who had "got his goat", or to be exact, a large number of his goats, not to mention sheep, pursued what the news letters of the day, in reporting the episode, called, no doubt, "the vulpine marauder", into its lair and, holding a torch in one hand, shot it with a weapon, probably a blunderbuss, held in the other.

So with sly little jests, bushels of commas, dashes and footnotes, Mr. Hudleston sets out on his junket. Writing of von Steuben he says little that is not generally known. Doubtless the Colonies owed as much to von Steuben as to any other man for their freedom from Great Britain. As drill-master of the Continental army it was his job to turn farm hands into straight backed soldiers; and he was so successful that our whole tatterdemalion soldiery was leavened. Accepting this task under the agreement that he was to be rewarded only if the Colonies were successful, von Steuben received a small farm from New Jersey and 16,000 acres from New York. Mr. Hudleston spices these facts with quips.

Mr. Hudleston is genial also toward Frederick Augustus, Duke of York, the person who reformed the British army, instituted the Royal Military College, and laid the foundation for the present Directorate of Military Operations and Intelligence. But when our skylarking author comes to Wellington he lashes out with some viciousness. The gallant and admirable seeming victor of Waterloo was the meanest kind of martinet, the lowest sort of snob, criminally vain and overweening, whose habit it was to make mistakes for which he ordered that other officers of his staff be shot. . . . And Garibaldi was a futile, ridiculous old man whose awkwardness, stupidity, and cowardice lost many men for the French on whose side he was supposed to be fighting in 1870.

Mr. Hudleston calls his rather diverting collection "Warriors in Undress". It has a portentous sound that is not particularly suited to its serio-comic, gossipy manner. The title leads the reader to expect a book more after the fashion of "Fix Bayonets!" by Captain John W. Thomason, Jr., U. S. M. C.

During 1917 and 1918 Captain Thomason was a junior officer of the First Battalion, Fifth Regiment, U. S. M. C., which made up a part of the Second American Division of regulars. He took part in attacks at Belleau Wood, Soissons, St. Mihiel and Champagne, and found time and inclination in those wearying days to fill up a sketch book with drawings which, now greatly supplemented, illustrate his prose accounts of those experiences. They are extraordinarily vivid, these sketches. The finished drawings have a solid, substantial quality; and angles are used with eerie and stunning effect. You will look in vain for the conventionalized soldier in these drawings, but you will find in nearly every one of them something that lights up the scene of war and its participants with a livid and unforgetable illumination.

Now and again Captain Thomason pictures hand to hand combat and bayonet duels. His battalion, or at

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least his company, must have been more bloodthirsty and warlike than most outfits. Very rarely in the pages of "Fix Bayonets!" are the marines of Captain Thomason's acquaintance willing simply to take a prisoner. They much preferred to — and frequently did — slaughter him after he had held up his hands. Another notable characteristic of this battalion of marines was their reliance more upon the bayonet than the Springfield rifle or Colt automatic, the reader gathers. It requires, to put it mildly, exceptional courage in a man to risk killing an armed enemy at a distance of three feet with a bayonet when he could have been shot to death at twenty paces with the ball of a thirty-thirty.

Warriors in Undress. By F. J. Hudleston. Little, Brown and Company.
Fix Bayonets! By John W. Thomason, Jr. Charles Scribner's Sons.

OPTIMISTIC PHILOSOPHY

By Woodbridge Riley

LUDWIG STEIN'S "Evolution and Optimism" is a model in the way of popularizing philosophy. It takes up the modern movements and makes them perhaps clearer than they are in themselves. It is like a map of a river system in which the haphazard affluents and tributaries are left out for the sake of emphasizing the main features. The title also is somewhat too simple. Some of the philosophers studied, like von Hartmann, Count Keyserling, and Friedrich Nietzsche, are not ordinarily considered optimists, nor can they be considered strictly idealists. As the author himself puts it, idealism offers the most ornamental frames for the various views of the world; but we have not been accustomed to consider the men just named as framed in gilt.

However, for sheer brilliancy of style this work is in refreshing contrast to much of the muddy metaphysics of our day. It presents portraits of modern "heroes of thought" in order to show that such a book as Spengler's "The Decline of the West" with its talk of the "metaphysical bankruptcy" of the Occident is not true. On the contrary, the assets of recent speculation are considered greater than its liabilities, while America, with its social optimism, is the chief depositary of the funds of progress. Yet to put Hugo Muensterberg among the Americans is somewhat far fetched. His "eternal values" were largely borrowed from the bank of Hegel and Company, a house which had much worthless paper on its hands in the way of the blank categories of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. In fact, Muensterberg's metaphysics, even when presented by his own powerful personality, always struck one as highly artificial. He worked the triadic rhythm of Hegel for more than it was worth. There were four and twenty categories in his system just as there were four and twenty rooms in Emerson Hall where he happened to be teaching — in short the whole affair was one of mere coincidence.

With Muensterberg's colleague, William James, things were quite different. The horror of Hegel with his "hollow god" of dialectic drove James to that form of pragmatism which descended from the high heaven of metaphysics into the very dirt of reality. So the author rightly represents James as an independent Yankee who considers the new world as no longer a philosophical colony of the old. Consequently when the pragmatist is criticized as confining himself to the

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realm of the relative and failing utterly to concern himself with the absolute Stein makes him say: "That is just what I want. I am a dialectical democrat, I hate everything absolute, whatever it be: an absolute monarch or an absolute idea. Both tyrannize, and I hate tyranny in every form, including the tyranny of concepts. I will submit, if necessary, to a supreme law as a prudential imperative, but never as a categorical imperative. I will subordinate myself in my own enlightened self-interest to the supreme law of the common weal because in this I am an interested member, a participant, and a beneficiary."

Stein has the rare faculty of making the modern philosophers live and move on his pages. He possesses a kind of kinetoscopic vision which enables one to see the very workings of the minds of men like Schopenhauer, Hartmann, and Nietzsche. Thus the protagonist in pessimism is described as a bilious temperament who offers all the storm and stress of his experience as a "world". But, it is added, the pessimistic poison of this philosophical Buddhist, which a generation ago so infected a whole age that everyone exhibited a pessimistic tendency, is counteracted today by the antitoxin of the superman doctrine. Now between Schopenhauer, the transplanter of Buddhism into Europe, and Nietzsche, the advocate of the superman, came Hartmann who, like both these thinkers, was a sufferer. The author gives this picture of him:

> While Schopenhauer's star was in the ascendant, and Nietzsche blazed suddenly like a meteor, Hartmann — when the spark of life was almost extinguished — went to bed one fine day an invalid officer of twenty four without any prospects, and awoke the next fine morning to find himself a celebrated German philosopher. In the year 1868 appeared his "Philosophy of the Unconscious" over which the lame young officer had worked incessantly for three years amidst misery borne heroically without at first having any idea where the path would lead him.

Stein's book is a veritable picture gallery of modern thinkers, and no student of the three difficult philosophers just mentioned can fail to be grateful for this generous portraiture of men who have been wont to be dismissed as mere mad metaphysicians. There remain two other figures whom the author treats in the way they should be treated, not so much with sympathy for their alleged sufferings as with sharp criticism for their conceits. Such, for one, is Count Keyserling who might be called an entire Uffizi gallery in himself. His two ponderous volumes, "The Travel Diary of a Philosopher", furnish a kind of self portraiture which is almost laughable in its sickly seriousness. It is a curious fact that the Esthonian Count belongs to that family of Keyserlings once visited by Immanuel Kant — but what a contrast between the modest and retiring thinker of Koenigsberg and this remote connection of Kant's friends. Stein claims that he was the first among the German philosophers to give a sympathetic reception to Keyserling as he appeared in his early works, but now he finds him too romantically inclined, too prone to an adoration of instincts and of the unaffected, unreflecting, natural understanding of man at the cost of all abstract knowledge through reason.

Another exponent of the neo-romantic movement is Houston Stewart Chamberlain, whose doctrine of the superiority of the Nordic "race" is attacked with a surprising frankness. Stein, himself a German, grants that whoever falls under the hypnotic influence of "this mesmerist of style, this telepathist of history", will feel

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how difficult it is to strip the glamour from this strange dream of an historical spirit-seer. And he goes on to say: Here the logical error of neo-romanticism sets in; Chamberlain huddles together indiscriminately ethnic groups of different epochs and grades of culture. He makes use of the classification, "race", which is derived from the jargon of breeders, as a universal historical principle of classification and explanation. . . . The neo-romanticism of Chamberlain revives the old Cain and Abel myth. Everything high-spirited or radiant, everything upstanding or high strung; in short, all light and splendor is showered upon the one "race", the German, whereas everything bent and broken, everything spiritually crippled and twisted, all spiritual blindness and spiritual deafness, is imputed to the Semites, in particular the Jews. "With one God, with the other Satan; with one the race of Ormuzd, with the other the race of Ahriman."

Evolution and Optimism. By Dr. Ludwig Stein. With a preface by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler. Thomas Seltzer.

MILT GROSS — A NEW HUMORIST

By Frank Crowninshield

EVERY ten years or so the figure of a new American humorist looms, a little miraculously, on our literary horizon. Singularly enough, the genius of these writers has been such that, in the great majority of cases, they have elected to deliver their messages — their philosophy and criticism of life — in dialect. This is a condition true only in America. Search as you will the literatures of France and England to find a considerable group of dialect humorists and you will search in vain. But in America the masters of dialect seem always to be paramount.

Take, for example, such figures as Artemus Ward, Josh Billings, James Whitcomb Riley, Joel Chandler Harris, Finley Peter Dunne, George Ade, and Ring Lardner. Certainly a glorious company! And glorious not because they are humorous or comical fellows; nor because their dialect is, in itself, laughter provoking; but because they have studied life long and assiduously, lived it ardently and — though they have suffered under its lash — loved it well. Further, they impart to us the precise truth about life, but impart it in terms of philosophy, of sympathy and of understanding, even when it is disguised in dialect and saturated with their very special stylistic flavor.

Note, too, that in every case the dialect employed by these humorists is entirely secondary to their themes. Remove every bit of dialect from their writings and the men in question still remain great humorists; great analysts of the human heart.

And now, a new figure has appeared against our literary sky; a figure which we may some day have to add to the gallery of great American humorists; the figure, to be explicit, of Milt Gross, a prodigy from the Bronx; a lad about to step into the thirties and a writer who, publishing his work first in the New York "World", and later in "Vanity Fair", has so perfectly revealed to us the microcosmic world of a Hebrew tenement house in the Bronx. In all these first writings of his — his "dumbwaiter conversations" — he has concentrated his attention, either on the members, young and old, of the Feitlebaum family who inhabit the second floor of the tenement in question, or on their neighbors, the

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Yifnifs, who occupy the floor below.

Truth — the truth about life, and people, and children, and the human emotions — is what chiefly concerns this new writer, just as it was truth that chiefly interested the masters who immediately preceded him. It should be noted, too, that Gross's dialect, in his dumbwaiter pieces, is meticulously correct. Examine the patois carefully and you will find that, no matter how extravagant it may appear or how seemingly exaggerated, it still remains an authentic and convincing dialect, the language of a large and constantly growing group of New Yorkers. Mr. Gross has studied his tenement dwellers (their hearts, natures, and lingo) just as faithfully as Dunne and Ade and Lardner ever studied the amazing types whom they dissect and reveal with so much sympathy and understanding.

These dumbwaiter classics by Mr. Gross can best be appreciated when read aloud. Their author is distinctly a *phonetic* humorist. In this connection it may truthfully be said that the members of New York's literary and artistic Bohemia are already divided into two groups — those who can expertly read his works aloud, and those who, however great their interest, falter a little, stammer even, in pursuing this new and popular social pastime. It is certain that the appearance of "Nize Baby", Mr. Gross's first published opus, will make it possible for the fortunate beings who can already intone his works with precision and ease to become still greater social favorites — whether they perform at literary gatherings, country houses, or smart dinner parties in town.

Nize Baby. By Milt Gross. George H. Doran Company.

SONGS AND SINGERS

By Gilbert W. Gabriel

HAVELOCK ELLIS — and Carl Van Vechten after him — have delighted in their several ways to point out that musicians almost invariably make bad authors. Words are not only strangers to composers; they are worse than that, poor relations, to be slapped off with condescension. When Rimsky-Korsakoff and Saint-Saëns become autobiographical in print, the one is as phlegmatic as the other is silly. Boito was probably the only composer who could handle language as well as he could handle lilts; but then, Boito was three quarters author, anyhow.

So let us claim no great literary subtleties on behalf of either "Melodies and Memories", the life story of Dame Nellie Melba, or of "After the Ball", the Charles K. Harris opus in prose on the theme of his life and works. The business of providing or interpreting music has pressed upon such as these too immediately, and their histories are too full of the delights of the everyday, to permit any dallying with the question of literary graces. Both books have the virtues of naïveté unabashed and self esteem unembarrassed.

Dame Melba has had a charmed life. She knows it, admits it, and permits you to bask in the complacent glory of it. Her tale is of a glorious voice, completely surrounded by fascinating circumstances. From her early days on the edge of the Australian bush, through that short period in the heart of it when she lived in a "little house with a galvanized iron roof, desolate and lonely, with no other company than that of the birds and especially the reptiles", and when she did not even dream of the days when she would

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hobnob with Alfred de Rothschild, sing to empresses, and be the heroine of a confection known as "Peach Melba", she swings the circle of her chatty, almost fabulous, narrative.

It was with Madame Marchesi, possibly the most celebrated of all teachers in the day just past, that Dame Melba studied. To her she gives the wreath of her largest gratitude, and concerning her and her methods the story is interesting indeed. Thence it goes straight into opera — into that début in 1887 when Melba sang her first notes at Monnaie in Brussels. Thence into the succeeding débuts in London and Paris, St. Petersburg, Milan, Nice, New York. Meanwhile, all sorts of happy meetings and greetings with musical and social celebrities: with Tosti and Ambroise Thomas, with Puccini, Mascagni, Massenet, with king and kaiser, the Beresfords, the Vanderbilts, Caruso, Hammerstein, Northcliffe, Charlie Chaplin, and innumerable gleeful and glittering etceteras, from and to the life.

On the wings of her voice Dame Melba has soared to the high C of existence, and you cannot blame her if now and again, in sheer exultation, she trills the note of it. When you think of that altogether wooden biography which told her history to date in 1909, you will be happy to see how much better she can tell it for herself — and on herself — fifteen years later. In the life of a Nellie Melba, too, they have had to be fifteen years of added wonder.

It must not be thought that the orbit of Charles K. Harris's life has swung so high and wide. Mr. Harris, by entitling his book "After the Ball", gives you his sincerest reasons for the writing of his autobiography. This was the great sentimental ballad of its day, the joy of all warblers and colored lantern slides in an era when prima donnas of the burlesque shows were ripe in figure, if a bit green in voice. Mr. Harris has lived his life in a smaller eddy than has the international Melba. He is no less blithe and proud about it, however. Milwaukee was his battleground, and "After the Ball" his triumph. It sold hundreds of thousands of copies, made a fortune, and caused tears to stick in the throat of a nation.

Little Charlie Harris began to play the banjo in Saginaw, Michigan. He continued to play the banjo in Milwaukee, meanwhile composing such meteoric music as "Creep, Baby, Creep" and "Kiss and Let's Make Up". We see Mr. Harris becoming more and more of a song writer and publisher as he becomes less of a banjo player; we follow him on sundry profitable excursions to Chicago: we see him launching into the manufacture of his own sheet music, growing prosperous, a benedict, yet no less an indomitable creator in words and tune of those fair, fond sentiments which are guaranteed to "stop the show" and to be distributed thereafter upon the million piano racks of all states of the union.

His acquaintanceships, nay his friendships among theatrical people are described with honest gusto. A full, unforced account of the life of one of those who, rather than make their country's laws, have preferred to write its songs — such songs as "My Mama Lives Up in the Sky", "A Rabbi's Daughter", and "Is Life Worth Living?" Mr. Harris always answers that last title in the glad affirmative.

Memories and Melodies. By Nellie Melba. George H. Doran Company.

After the Ball. By Charles K. Harris. Frank-Maurice.

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BRET HARTE BOBS UP

By Robert Cortes Holliday

IN no less cerebral a quarter than "The American Mercury" appeared the other day an article on "The Bret Harte Country", and now comes before us a volume of 515 pages of "The Letters of Bret Harte", assembled and edited by one Geoffrey Bret Harte. "Is there a Bret Harte revival coming about?" says the reader as he opens the book, and he thinks of the rediscovery of Frank Norris and, now going on, of Stephen Crane. He gets himself all set, perhaps, for something racy of our early soil.

If so, he gets left. The frontispiece is from an aristocratic portrait by J. Pettie, R. A., and the book is dedicated to the Duchess of St. Albans, "one of Bret Harte's oldest friends". The correspondence presented is that of a gentleman in delicate health who was for a period American Consul at Crefeld in Germany, then in Glasgow, afterward resided for twenty years in England, and died in Surrey, in 1902. The bulk of the letters are domestic in character, having been written to his wife. The best are a few written to his children. Altogether, however, the book tells a curious story. A brief "biographical sketch" by the editor precedes the letters. The bland notes by the editor sandwiched in between the letters give little but sentimental eulogy of his subject. The essential, and novel, romance of the story you have to put together for yourself.

Little Bret Harte was reading Shakespeare at six. At eighteen he went with his mother from his first home in Albany, New York, to live in California, where after a brief look around he became a messenger for the Wells Fargo Express; soon turned to newspaper work in San Francisco; began to contribute sketches to periodicals in company with Mark Twain and Stoddard; held the position in San Francisco of Secretary of the United States Mint, and was also professor of literature at the University of California; was first editor of "The Overland Monthly". And when he was thirty two "The Luck of Roaring Camp" brought him such fame that Dickens wrote urging him to come to London as contributor to "All the Year Round", of which Dickens was editor. At about this period the letters here begin.

The proprietors of "The Atlantic" offered him (in 1870!) ten thousand dollars for his literary work for a year. He left California much disliked by the people there. His journey east was featured by the London papers. Before long he took up lecturing, not very successfully; people were inclined to regard him as a fop. He got his appointment abroad, at twenty five hundred a year. Soon his own country appeared to regard him as played out, and his character was occasionally maligned. He passed his elderly days in England because he could get better rates from "The Illustrated London News" than he could at home. He always cared most for the land of his birth. From his experience of less than a year in the gold days he got his stock in trade for a lifetime of writing. His life as here shown was blameless, and from "The Heathen Chinee" (about 1868) onward you can't say much more for it.

The Letters of Bret Harte. Assembled and edited by Geoffrey Bret Harte. Houghton Mifflin Company.

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IN BRIEF REVIEW

BEATRICE WEBB, a pioneer of the modern British Cooperative Labor Movement, writes the story of her earlier lifetime in "My Apprenticeship" (Longmans, Green), a book voluminous in reminiscences of intellectual, political, and reform leaders of the Seventies and Eighties. Mrs. Webb was during the latter decade the friend of such eminent men as Herbert Spencer, John Morley, and Charles Booth, and when her maturing social work brought her into contact with the then young Fabian Society she became the colleague of Shaw, Massingham, Olivier, and Sidney Webb whom in 1892 she married. There the "Apprenticeship", having been converted into the distinguished partnership which still survives, comes appropriately to an end. The text of the book is composed of unaltered quotations from diaries kept by Mrs. Webb from girlhood till marriage, and of passages from miscellaneous writings on economic subjects published during this formative period of her career.

For the aspiring young writer who is honestly seeking to learn his craft, we can think of no better bible than a slender volume containing a lecture by Sherwood Anderson on "The Modern Writer". Unfortunately, only one thousand copies of this little book have been printed for the Lantern Press, in San Francisco. At first glance, there might not seem enough to go round. Still, if we are to regard the field closely, there may not be a thousand embryo writers in America who sincerely want to write what, for want of a better term, we call "literature" — writing that has beauty, permanence, that fearlessly touches all life to the quick. The frankness and simplicity with which Mr. Anderson so justly catalogues the various levels of successful fiction writing in present day America is nothing short of refreshing. He attributes much of the falseness, dull uniformity, and narrowness of outlook of the popular output to the industrial movement which took from all men the pride of craftsmanship. This argument is reasonable enough, and his presentation of the case for the so called "modern" is sane and hopeful.

"He says these things with a humor that is like sunshine on a raindrop", writes John O'London of Charles Lamb in "Unposted Letters" (Putnam). If we were to coin a phrase of our own to describe the style in which these letters are written, we could not come closer to the truth, for what John O'London says of Lamb applies no less to himself. He has in fine a priceless gift of words, a genial mellowness of outlook, and a seasoned wit. The "letters" are not letters at all but in reality fifty two short essays which appeared originally in the English weekly that bears the author's name. With a refreshing economy of words and with few digressions they treat a variety of subjects, from the peculiarities of William Shakespeare to the principles of good English, and from the appeal of Sherlock Holmes to the poetry of falling leaves in Gray's Inn Gardens. The publishers have made no mistake in declaring the book a "companionable volume for odd half-hours".

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George Glasgow, the author of "From Dawes to Locarno" (Harper), an inside observer of British and Continental diplomatic negotiations from the close of the war to the present time, writes illuminatingly of the interminable dickering which was finally crowned with victory by the conclusion of the Locarno Treaties. Austen Chamberlain, ablest and most persistent contemporary champion of ironbound international peace pacts, is naturally the book's hero. In fact, the work had been more appropriately entitled "Chamberlain and Locarno", since our own Dawes is mentioned but a brief half dozen times, and there is no trace at all in it of one Owen D. Young. The liberal appendices contain the texts of preliminary notes exchanged by the various governments involved and the main substance verbatim of the completed treaties signed last October at Locarno.

We can always count on William T. Hornaday for stimulating reading. As director of the New York Zoological Society, he has had intimate and varied contact with wild animals. In his latest book, "A Wild-Animal Round-Up" (Scribner), he takes us to all the corners of the world for his specimens. Buffalo and grizzly in the western states, the cave bird of Trinidad, Florida crocodiles, the musk ox of the Arctic, and the mountain sheep of Mexico are just a few of his subjects. If these do not furnish enough excitement, there is the fight with a python under the kitchen floor.

When Grandpa was a boy, he sneaked away to the hay loft and read Scott's novels, thereby getting a good start on the downward path. Today his grandson nonchalantly reads fiction that would have caused even profligate Grandpa to admit the world was going to the bowwows. Still, the novel is an integral part of literature, old and modern, and as such is discussed in "A Century of the English Novel" by Cornelius Weygandt (Century). From Scott to the ultramodern D. H. Lawrence the author traces the development of the "long story", not without some evidences of prejudice. Professor Weygandt probably relegates your favorite classical novelist to the foot of the second rater class (witness the unhappy fate of George Moore), but he provokes argument and controversy, which, after all, is what any worthwhile book does. And this book is distinctly worthwhile.

It is curious to note how large a part of most collections of epigrams is devoted to epitaphs. So solemn an authority as the Encyclopædia Britannica says, "A collection of epitaphs is generally one of the most amusing books that can be picked up." About a quarter of "The Soul of Wit" (Putnam) consists of epitaphs, and they justify the space given to them. George Rostrevor Hamilton, the anthologist, has elected to include only those epigrams which are in verse. Let who will complain against the man who has culled:

> Who seeks to please all men each way
> And not himself offend,
> He may begin to work today,
> But God knows when he'll end.

There will doubtless be many to agree with H. P. Collins and many to disagree with his provocative analysis of "Modern Poetry" (Houghton Mifflin). He considers such subjects as classicism and romanticism, modernism and the possibility of a poetic revival; and his favorite modern poets are evidently Thomas Hardy, Francis

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Thompson, Charles Doughty, Wilfred Owen, and H. D. If any criticism may be attempted within the limits of a very brief review, let us point out that Mr. Collins's reaction to poetry is primarily intellectual rather than emotional; that he displays too pronounced a tendency to rationalize the beauty of poetry and its appeal, and is therefore perhaps unconsciously setting off in pursuit of a minor rather than of a major art.

Arthur Symons's "Studies in Seven Arts" (Dutton) is a quaint bit of early twentieth century criticism. The essays treat of painting, sculpture, architecture, music, handicraft, the stage, and dancing. Surely these arts possess little of the liveliness of their hodiernal counterparts — cosmetics, cartooning, house wrecking, jazz, bootlegging, glorifying the American anatomy, and charlestoning. Symons's twenty year old essays give one something of the glow of vintage wine rather than the kick of synthetic gin. He felt that each art had its special quality in the universal science of beauty. And he speaks of these qualities as they are exemplified in the work of this artist or that. The "Studies" as a whole demonstrate that literature, the eighth art, has a special quality in that it can reveal the essence of the beauty of the other seven.

Those who believe that literary genius is made and not born will make no mistake in adding to the writer's library L. A. Sherman's "How to Describe and Narrate Visually" (Doran). The author considers such abstractions as narration, description, argumentation, exposition, and characterization and endows them with a concrete significance. The book is better adapted to classroom discussion than to independent study, but contains much of sound value for one who takes his writing seriously, and wants to be told. Illustrations and practice exercises, covering a wide range, have been selected with a view to stimulating the reader's interest. The volume comes as the outgrowth of the author's experience as professor of language and literature in the University of Nebraska.

A "new definitive edition" of the work of a modern author — especially a favorite one — is something to be prized. The edition of the works of William Butler Yeats is steadily growing and the fifth volume, "Early Poems and Stories" (Macmillan), is now available. The book begins with the epic narrative, "The Wanderings of Usheen", and is followed by "Crossways" and "The Rose", although many of the shorter poems included under these two general titles are of earlier date. The volume is further divided into "The Celtic Twilight", "The Secret Rose", "Rosa Alchemica", and "Stories of Red Hanrahan". Since their first publication, the stories contained in the last group have been revised and in some instances rewritten by Yeats with the help of Lady Gregory. They were originally "written in that artificial, elaborate English so many of us played with in the '90's", and Yeats had "come to hate them". So Lady Gregory was consulted and they worked together until the stories had been "put into that simple English she had learned from her Galway countrymen, and the thought had come closer to the life of the people". This is the only drastic change that has been made, although certain passages in the shorter poems and stories have been revised or omitted altogether. The volume

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is indispensable to those who would have a complete or a representative Yeats library, since some of his best work was written during these earlier adventures in simplicity.

The most striking fact about "American Silhouettes" by Arthur Crew Inman (Dutton) is that the author seems unable to appreciate the essential distinction between poetry and prose. The first piece, beginning "Hark ye! ye slaves of inhibition!" sets the standard for the book; the author does much declaiming but writes little poetry. Indeed, a majority of the pieces, if detached from their blank verse binding and printed unostentatiously as prose, would certainly not be recognized as anything except prose. This is unfortunate, for Mr. Inman has ideas, ideas which in many cases are well worth expressing; and in a few of his less ambitious pieces, as in his triolets, he gives evidence of a poetic capacity that one would never suspect from a perusal of a majority of the selections.

The 1925 series of lectures delivered under the Norman Wait Harris Memorial Foundation for the "promotion of a better understanding on the part of American citizens of other peoples of the world" have been published in two volumes by the University of Chicago Press. The first book, "Oriental Interpretations of the Far Eastern Problem", consists of "Japan, the Far East, and the United States" by Count Michimasa Soyeshima, and "China, the Far East, and the United States" by Dr. P. W. Kuo. The second, "Occidental Interpretations of the Far Eastern Problem", contains "Problems of Present-Day China" by H. G. W. Woodhead, "China's Economic Resources" by Julean Arnold, and "The Russians in the Far East" by Henry Kittredge Norton. Each of the five lecturers is an internationally recognized authority on the subject of his discourse, and combined they present a timely, invaluable summary of world questions which must soon be definitely and permanently solved.

Artuhr Symons is enthusiastic about the work of Villiers de l'Isle Adam to the extent of translating "Claire Lenoir" (A. and C. Boni). Unfortunately for our pleasure we cannot share his enthusiasm. M. de l'Isle Adam displays the penchant for complex souls which always makes him draw "some horribly stunted or horribly over-grown soul from under its obscure covering, setting it to dance naked before our eyes". The story at hand is concerned with the mysterious case of that discreet and scientific woman Claire Lenoir. The mystery involves the idea that the animals which serve us as nourishment conserve in their eyes the impression of the objects they have seen before they die. The author imagines the phenomenon occurring in human beings, with a result that is not coherent, erudite, nor particularly interesting. Several lyrical passages of prose, excellently translated by Mr. Symons, comprise the book's sole claim to distinction.

"Poetic Values" by John G. Neihardt (Macmillan) is a slender volume that contains more food for thought than many a lengthy disquisition. Mr. Neihardt is a critic not only of poetry but of life, and he sees a direct and necessary relationship between life and poetry. He condemns the materialistic outlook for the comparative neglect into which the best imaginative literature has fallen today,

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and he pleads valiantly the cause of poetry as a potent and vital force in the world. Even though one be not prepared to agree with his every assertion, one will find the book interesting and stimulating throughout; and, whatever one's literary creed, one will be able to peruse these two essays with profit and enjoyment.

Mrs. E. M. Ward's "Memories of Ninety Years" (Holt) is a rare documentation of a fascinating epoch; the reader is charmed by the diversity of interests and gifts possessed by this remarkably clever woman and famous artist. Many beloved ghosts float through the pages, revivified by Mrs. Ward's intimate, friendly touch. We read of her first childish meeting with Charles Dickens, when she inadvertently sat on his coat sleeve; of their subsequent friendship. Thackeray, too, with his whimsical mannerisms, appears, and Madame Albani, Patti, Grisi, Gounod, and other artists grace these memoirs, as well as many members of the Royal Family. There are facsimiles of letters from famous persons, and other interesting illustrations.

If "he-man" poetry is commendable from the masculine pen, so also there is a place for so womanly a book as "The Olympians" by Amory Hare (Dorrance). It should find an appreciative audience among those who like verse conservative, dignified, colored by an abundant love and a quiet religious faith rather than by wit, brilliancy, marked originality, or capricious and variable moods. The poem, "The Lifted Latch", might be called the feminine version of "The Great Lover". There is considerable unevenness of quality, especially in the lighter lyrics, but the more serious poems are up to the standards of our oldest monthlies.

"Historical Materialism" by Nikolai Bukharin (International) is a concise and quite adequate application of the materialistic conception of history to problems of sociology. Some metaphysical considerations and a general discussion of sociological theories are followed by an analysis of the entire complex of modern capitalistic society, the function of social classes, the motives and problems of revolutions, the transitional stages, the ideals of communism, etc. An imposing array of historical and philosophical references tends to confirm the general opinion as to the fine erudition and scholarship of the editor-in-chief of the Moscow "Pravda". For a system of sociology written by a Bolshevik the book is decidedly instructive and surprisingly readable.

A. E. Baker, in "How to Understand Philosophy" (Doran), has contributed a valuable and instructive guide to those unacquainted with philosophic history and thought. Beginning with Pythagoras and Socrates, concluding with Bergson, he has analyzed in facile terms, and without prejudice or personal opinion, the methods and doctrines of the greater European philosophers. His explanations are both full and concise, yet wholly lacking in evidence of strained or overwrought attempt. Although it is perhaps regrettable that he did not more clearly explain the attitudes of Schopenhauer, it is pleasant to note that he appreciates and comprehends the fierce and forceful Nietzsche, sufficiently to see him not only as a classicist but also as an æsthete and a dreamer.

Why cannot a college student, preparing himself to be a writer, be persuaded to read the papers and magazines he intends to write for?

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Why must he confine himself so closely to textbooks that practical minded professors must reedit our periodicals and publish them in textbook covers? These pedagogical questions do not, however, prevent the new edition of "Writing of Today: Models of Journalistic Prose" (Century) selected by J. W. Cunliffe and Gerhard R. Lomer from being a very readable anthology. Its classified articles are selected from both newspapers and literary magazines; many of them are written by well known men of letters.

When a true artist begins to draw for the pure fun of it, the results are generally exceedingly worthwhile. In his odd moments, Sir Edward Burne-Jones wrote letters to a young lady — delightful bits of nonsense, illustrated with that careful disregard of artistic convention that only a great artist can afford to display. The illustrations are of a breezy, offhand type very comforting after the perusal of a few pages of almost any comic weekly. "Letters to Katie" (Macmillan) is short enough to read through in fifteen minutes, but is one of those rare books that one frequently pulls off the shelf to thumb a bit, chuckling shamefacedly the while over the absurdly childish yet indubitably first rate caricatures, vagaries, and the rollicking overflow of an artistic mind.

"Judgment and Other Poems" by Thomas Minor Pelly (Seattle: Lowman and Hanford), printed in a signed edition limited to some three hundred copies, is a fair example of the innumerable little books that are pouring from our presses as witnesses to the widespread interest in the writing of verse. Like many of these it is written with a grace and finish sufficient to deceive the casual glance, and conceal momentarily the fact that it has little to say, and no promise of unusual talent or power.

The fine, inflexible spirit of British scholarship marches erect through "English Satire and Satirists" (Dutton) by Hugh Walker, M.A., LL.D., D.Litt. Perhaps it is a bit rough on the learned author to disparage him because he does not strike a livelier pace. Perhaps it is the superior merit of his quotation which merely makes him *seem* a little dull! We need not worry now about all the causes for which Englishmen have fought and bled and which they have attacked in pamphlets; but to know English satire is to know good style. Satire in its essence demands neatness, pregnancy, skill in antithesis, aphoristic force, and a jocund fancy. One finds them in abundance in this volume because the quotations are liberal. Placed end to end they make an excellent little manual which might be entitled "How to Write — try and do it".

Although somewhat technical in title, "Criminology and Penology" by John Lewis Gillin (Century) is written in such manner that it may be readily understood by those without background on the subject of crime. Dr. Gillin, who is a professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin, has gone to the very heart of his topic, illustrating his analyses with detailed descriptions of a large number of interesting cases. He is not content, however, with a mere study. In his closing chapter he presents a practical and orderly plan for the study and treatment of criminals, and for the prevention of crime through the medium of proper education. Since his plan is original, fashioned after the practices of the University of Wisconsin and not

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after those of the larger municipalities, it is perhaps worthy of the attention of everyone.

History necessarily traces the causes and effects of events of the past. This in itself is of interest. If written easily, however, and with regard to romance, it immediately becomes alive, and therefore of additional interest. Because of this quality Edward P. Cheyney's "A History of England" (Longmans, Green) is inestimable. His work comprises the many stirring events which occurred from the defeat of the Spanish Armada to the death of the vehement Elizabeth. It is replete with quotations from records of state and from personal documents, and its vivid descriptions, especially in the treatment of the trial and death of the Earl of Sussex, cause it to be both excellent textbook and excellent story.

Some time ago Alice Hunt Bartlett, through an English poetry review, conducted a contest for the best sea sonnet. A hundred of the poems submitted, some dozen of which are worth reading, have been published in "The Sea Anthology" (Brentano), together with sufficient sea poetry from Virgil to the present to make the book worthwhile to lovers of the ocean. Not the least interesting part of the book is the prose comment on the changing treatment of the sea. In the contest section a great many well known poets are represented, but by poems curiously reminiscent of classroom exercises.

"The Practical Book of Tapestries" (Lippincott) has a title that seems a bit misleading, for the volume is in reality a sumptuous history of art. The author, George Leland Hunter, declares vigorously that he will "stick to facts", but so colorful and enchanting are these facts of the origin and development of tapestry making through the ages that the book becomes a magnificent narrative closely linked with secular and religious progress. Even to the layman, the non-collector, these marvelous designs seem to represent the very warp and woof of life, especially of life in the fourteenth century, that golden age of weaving. The book is tremendous in scope and takes time to give credit to numerous American collections, mostly private, in which striking examples of these designs occur. Slightly more utilitarian in theme is "The Practical Book of Chinaware" (Lippincott). But the authors, Harold Donaldson Eberlein and Roger Wearne Ramsdell, do not neglect those romantic debts which we owe to the Orientals, who were the first people to perfect the art of china making. This book, too, is large in scope, and as liberally and colorfully illustrated as the book on tapestries. Both volumes are valuable for their authenticity and their readable style.

In these days of the popularization of history, we predict a successful American career for Noel Williams's translation of G. Lenôtre's "Paris Révolutionnaire". "Paris in the Revolution" (Brentano) is a morsel edifying to the palates of those who like their history well seasoned with the salt of satire and the spice of speculation. The author aims to supply what the political reports of the Revolution lacked, namely a sense of the setting against which the deeds of those times were projected. In declaring this intention he disarms the unimaginative reader at the outset: "I shall speak of the color of Robespierre's foot-coverlets, and I know the name of the

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Citoyenne Danton's waiting-woman. I shall reveal what Marat would have eaten for his supper in the evening, if Charlotte Corday had not, for ever and ever, freed him from the material cares of existence, and I shall not conceal what stuff covered the arm-chair of the President of the Convention." The result is the humanization of much of the stuff of history which we learned at school and promptly forgot.

True tales of the sea's hardiest fishermen, of their hazardous voyages and adventures, are thrillingly told in E. Keble Chatterton's "Whalers and Whaling" (Lippincott). Although it is solid maritime history, drawn from the records of innumerable expeditions to the waters of the giant mammals, the book has the fascination of romance. It contains exact information on every element of the precarious industry from the earliest times to the present day, and is illustrated by nearly fifty prints which the author claims with justice to be "the finest pictorial narrative of the subject ever attempted".

The very title of the volume "Creative Freedom" (Harper) by J. W. T. Mason promises the reader a substantial literary meal, and when he has carefully digested Mr. Mason's twenty two chapters his intellectual appetite is fully appeased. The book is a serious attempt to lay bare the principles of human life and to discover the direction in which civilization is tending. The term "creative freedom" is employed to denote the quest which stimulates the evolution of existence in its progress away from disintegration, or extinction. The first half of the book deals largely with abstract theory and a detailed historical survey, since the author believes that the difficulties of living are reflected in the difficulties in tracing the meaning of life. There is, therefore, a protracted restatement of "some of the old problems" concerning woman, æsthetics, religion, evil, ethics, and personality; in the second half there is more concrete discussion of twentieth century tendencies and a study of such interrelationships as philosophy and science, art and reality, knowledge and action, heredity and free will. Throughout the volume Mr. Mason emphasizes the power of the subconscious, although he does not use the term in the Freudian sense. He shows markedly the influence of Bergson and of the latter's "Creative Evolution", to which he extends high praise.

"Old Times", by Walter Clifford Meller of St. John's College, Oxford (Brentano), is a book that no one who has antiquarian tastes, a liking for folk lore, or an interest in quaint and curious legends, manners, and customs, should fail to read. This entertaining work is replete with knowledge of the social history of Great Britain from Saxon times, through the mediæval period, down to our own more enlightened but less picturesque and less reverent age. One cannot read it carefully without gaining respect for the simple faith, the religious fervor, and the standards of charity, loyalty, and obedience to the higher powers that obtained in what we are pleased to call the "dark ages" of our world. The book stimulates also an admiration for the really fine in architecture as represented in the ancient memorial, market, boundary, preaching, and weeping crosses that dotted the roads of England and Continental Europe from the time of Constantine's edict for such erections until the vandalism of the Reformation period.

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America

The impression which constantly recurs to the compiler of this Monthly Score is that of an insatiable public curiosity in the matter with which the new title appearing in this month's general list is concerned. Why do we behave like human beings? The question is the natural corollary to the discovery, new to a vastly larger number of people than most of us imagine, that the famous people of all time have behaved precisely like the human beings they were. If one thing seems clear, in an age when most things seem muddier than they ever were before, it is that the age of hero worship has passed. It is the private life of Helen of Troy which intrigues the modern reader. If this sort of thing keeps up — the publication of real or fictionized biographies which present their subjects as something less austere than plaster saints — aren't some of the younger generation going to wonder whether their own immediate elders are as impeccable as their parental poses attempt to convey? And then what becomes of parental authority? For that matter, what has become of authority of every sort — parental, pontifical, or royal? Even the old histories and biographies have lost their authority, as witness the flood of revealing books which the authorities of a past generation would have branded as nothing less than subversive, if they did not burn them as blasphemous. Well, at any rate, we are getting rid of some of our tribal taboos; and when one of the lesser tribes without the law does that, we call it progress. — F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	The Perennial Bachelor	*Anne Parrish*	HARPER
2.	The Keeper of the Bees	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
3.	Thunder on the Left	*Christopher Morley*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	Wild Geese	*Martha Ostenso*	DODD
5.	The Vanishing American	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
6.	Glorious Apollo	*E. Barrington*	DODD
7.	One Increasing Purpose	*A. S. M. Hutchinson*	LITTLE
8.	Portrait of a Man with Red Hair	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
9.	The Professor's House	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF
10.	Soundings	*A. Hamilton Gibbs*	LITTLE
11.	The Constant Nymph	*Margaret Kennedy*	DOUBLEDAY
12.	The Private Life of Helen of Troy *	*John Erskine*	BOBBS

GENERAL

1.	The Man Nobody Knows	*Bruce Barton*	BOBBS
2.	The Travel Diary of a Philosopher	*Count Keyserling*	HARCOURT
3.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	The Fruit of the Family Tree	*Albert Edward Wiggam*	BOBBS
5.	Ariel: The Life of Shelley	*André Maurois*	APPLETON
6.	John Keats	*Amy Lowell*	HOUGHTON
7.	Twenty-five Years	*Viscount Grey of Fallodon*	STOKES
8.	The New Decalogue of Science	*Albert Edward Wiggam*	BOBBS
9.	Anatole France Himself	*Jean-Jacques Brousson*	LIPPINCOTT
10.	Mark Twain's Autobiography	*Samuel L. Clemens*	HARPER
11.	Why We Behave Like Human Beings *	*G. A. Dorsey*	HARPER
12.	Twice Thirty	*Edward W. Bok*	SCRIBNER

*This title has not before appeared in the Monthly Score.

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THE SEVEN SEAS

"Toute la France" — Paris "Discovers" Contemporary American Authors — André Gide's "Les Faux-Monnayeurs" — Fritz Wittels and His Work

IN the preface to his admirable volume "Toute la France", Emile Saillens declares his intention of presenting his subject in much the same manner as a botanist describes a great tree. Starting with the soil from which it sprang, he proceeds to examine the roots, the mighty trunk from which project various sturdy branches, bearing in their turn leaves and fruit, the latter containing seeds capable of producing other growths when transported overseas. Following this plan, the author first devotes several chapters to a description of the physical conformation of the former provinces of France which, to his mind, has had a predominant influence on their later development and on the history of the country as a whole. Next he traces a rapid summary of the political history of the French people and sketches, at greater length, the commercial, agricultural, and industrial resources of France today, and its principal social and intellectual aspects. He also provides a necessarily brief outline of the principal tendencies of French literature from the time of the troubadours to the postwar generation. Finally, M. Saillens shows how French civilization, culture, and tradition have influenced other countries.

"Toute la France" is a model of succinct information, much of it not to be found outside special works of reference. It is rendered the more accessible thanks to a remarkably complete index. Nor is M. Saillens ever dull. On the contrary, the freedom with which he ventures on debatable ground, his abundance of original ideas, and the vigor with which he presents his point of view make the book as stimulating as it is informative. Altogether a volume well deserving translation, since it cannot fail to make all interested in France more intelligently appreciative of the present conditions and historical background of a remarkable country.

* * * *

How many American novel readers are familiar with the names or work of Robert McAlmon, Ernest Hemingway, William Carlos Williams, and E. E. Cummings? How many would declare they were outstanding figures in the contemporary literary history of the United States? That such is the case, however, we are assured by the editor of the interesting magazine "Le Navire d'Argent", which in its next number will publish translations from the work of these four authors. Before venturing to criticize the opinions of Adrienne Monnier, the editor of this periodical, it would be well to remember that she is an extremely intelligent young woman, gifted with a positively uncanny flair for the worthwhile in modern literature. Paul Valéry, Georges Duhamel, Jules Romains, Marcel Proust, Valéry Larbaud, are some of those authors whose gifts she recognized long before they had achieved their present fame. Judging

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by this record, it is at least reasonably safe to assume that the American authors she acclaims will attain some measure of fame or success. At all events it will be interesting to note the reception their work will receive at the hands of the French critics. The same number of the "Navire d'Argent" will contain also the translation of a political speech by Walt Whitman never before printed, even in English, in any edition of the poet's prose writings. It was found in proof form among a lot of miscellaneous papers in a second hand bookstore by Jean Catel, professor at the University of Montpellier, during a recent trip to Boston.

At the same time that the "Navire d'Argent" puts to sea bearing this cargo from abroad, another periodical, "Les Cahiers du Mois", presents a number devoted also to American authors and featuring especially Sherwood Anderson. An important feature of the number is an article entitled "Vue Cavalière sur la Littérature Américaine" by that brilliant if iconoclastic young critic and essayist Bernard Faÿ. He touches briefly, and somewhat cryptically, on certain phases of contemporary literary production. He condemns a tendency he finds in many of the older writers to imitate European masters more or less successfully rather than to strike out for themselves and seek inspiration in the country itself. Mr. Fay pays his respects to Edith Wharton, some of whose stories he admires, but much of whose work he considers might have been written by a suburban gentleman married to the cook employed by a cousin of the Proust family. He ignores Theodore Dreiser, gushes over Glenway Wescott, and speaks of John Dos Passos and Waldo Frank. We are mercifully spared any allusions to either Jack London or Upton Sinclair who, if sales are any criterion, enjoy a far wider fame in France than all other American authors put together, with the possible exceptions of James Oliver Curwood and Edgar Allan Poe. The latter was, however, naturalized in France once and for all by Baudelaire's translation, in the days when he was still looked upon with suspicion by his compatriots. Perhaps a similar fate awaits some of those other American authors whom France is just now discovering.

* * * *

A coincidence which any novelist might have been tempted to employ is amusingly revealed in the simultaneous prosecution of the Hungarian counterfeiters and the appearance of André Gide's new novel "Les Faux-Monnayeurs". The coin and notes his characters put into circulation have of course only an intellectual value. Yet who is prepared to say that a false doctrine, an unsound but brilliant paradox, a subtly conveyed suggestion of evil passing from mind to mind, cannot do as much harm as cleverly imitated bits of paper? M. Gide's counterfeiters are a singularly unsavory band. Perverts, weaklings, false prophets, all equally glib in defending their moral shortcomings, it requires all the author's unquestionable talent to interest us in their doings and make us accept his arbitrary treatment of their lives and loves. For — and this is M. Gide's great weakness in the present novel — the plot of "Les Faux-Monnayeurs" is hopelessly artificial. Instead of human beings acting in accordance with natural laws we are shown masked puppets manœuvred by all too visible strings. The different pieces of his story fall into place with the mechanical precision of the missing word that solves a cross word puzzle. But in spite of its shortcomings "Les Faux-

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Monnayeurs" is a significant work. An exposition of a singularly devastating moral philosophy, it is also an intensely interesting psychological document which, like many a passage in the pages of Marcel Proust, carries the torch of art into some of the hitherto unexplored caverns of the human soul.

* * * *

The recent publication by Messrs. Allen and Unwin in England of Fritz Wittels's "An End to Poverty" has aroused some curiosity concerning the personality of this remarkable Viennese writer. Like Arthur Schnitzler, Wittels is a doctor by profession. He is, in fact, a psychoanalyst, though not a strictly "orthodox" Freudian; and two years ago his book "Sigmund Freud, His Personality, His Teaching, and His School", written by one who is intimately acquainted with all the leading figures in the psychoanalytic world, aroused considerable attention. These are the only two of Wittels's books that have been translated into English. His imaginative writings are little known outside Austria and Germany — and not so well known there as they deserve to be. Three of them are worth mention: "Alles um Liebe, eine Urweltdichtung", 1912; "Der Juwelier von Bagdad", 1914; and "Zacharias Pamperl", 1923.

The last is the most noteworthy. Upton Sinclair (whose novels, by the way, have an immense vogue in Germany and Russia) regards it as a great book. Certainly it is a most readable one, and gives an extraordinarily vivid picture of wartime life in Vienna, Constantinople, and Asia Minor. Even mutilated Austria would probably like to retain some vestige of self respect, and of that curious form of self respect which is respect for a vanished past, so it is easy to understand why "Pamperl" is not a best seller in the land of its birth. Nor is it likely to be translated, for Wittels is plainspoken about other matters besides war contracts and the blunders of the High Command. He is never coarse, like Wycherley of "The Plain Dealer", but he is frank, and the mealy mouthed British and American public will not tolerate frankness where sexual topics are concerned. The translator would have to emasculate the book.

The volume "Alles um Liebe" contains an "Imaginative Portion", and a number of supplementary essays to elucidate the theme. The imaginative portion is a prehistoric sketch, rather in the Wellsian vein, illustrating the author's theories as to the part played by love and death in the early stages of human social evolution.

"Der Juwelier von Bagdad" is a short novel, and a tale of Haroun's Bagdad. The Caliph is called not Haroun, but Hamsa; and the Vizier not Giafar, but Idrisso; for the author wants a free hand with his history. But the picture of the "good" Caliph is unmistakable — a calculating and bloodthirsty tyrant like the Haroun of the play "Hassan". The amazing feature of the novel is the way in which it incorporates much of the essence of the new psychology without producing any sense of anachronism. This "Arabian Tale" is quite translatable, and ought to be translated, for it is a masterpiece.

Other books by Wittels which I mention only in passing are "Ezechiel der Zugereiste" (Huber and Lahme, Vienna), "Die Sexuelle Not" (E. W. Stern, Vienna), and "Alte Liebeshändel" (Jahoda and Siegel, Vienna). It will be seen that, for a man little over forty who has to make his livelihood by professional work and had several years taken up by military

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service during the Great War, Wittels has a fair amount of writing to his credit. And all his writing has been worthwhile.

"An End to Poverty" sounds like a dry, sociological work. A book is a book whether it be about the differential calculus or the theory of relativity, and a book about either may be well or badly written. Sociological writers are generally poor literary craftsmen. But when a master of the pen has something to say upon a sociological topic, he will produce a book which it will be a pleasure to read from the mere charm of its style. Such a book is "An End to Poverty".

It is a brilliant exposition of the scheme for Universal Civil Service devised by the late Josef Popper, better known by his pen name of Lynkeus. That writer held that the fundamental social problem, at the present stage of social evolution, is to organize society in such a way as to guarantee security for all, to provide unconditionally "subsistence" or "minimum" for all throughout life. This would be done, he believed, by a scheme of Universal Civil Service, replacing the Universal Military Service of our present warlike and predatory communities. Every able bodied man or woman would serve for a term of years in the Minimum Army or Subsistence Army until the minimum requisites of food, clothing, shelter, the necessary articles of furniture, medical care, and skilled nursing were supplied for every member of the community throughout life.

After subsistence had been provided, and when the scheme was in full working order, a certain "cultural minimum" would also be supplied — such as is already provided gratuitously by our museums, libraries, and other public services. Anything beyond the subsistence minimum and the cultural minimum would be accounted luxury. In the domain of luxuries, the economic system of today, based on private ownership, individual enterprise, and free contract, would continue. The power of the capitalist system for evil would be broken, its power for good would persist.

Eden and Cedar Paul (the translators) write in their preface to "An End to Poverty": "There are certain things which society cannot tolerate. Poverty is one. Shirking is another. An end to poverty will come from the recognition of the universal birthright. An end to shirking (whether by the tramp or by the millionaire) will be secured by the enforcement of the universal birth duty. The other graces will follow in their proper places. There you have the essence of Lynkeus's scheme."

MICHAEL JOSEPH

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

THE annual dinner of the Women's National Book Association was much more amusing than are most grandiose affairs of this sort in this town. Miss Simpson, of Loeser's, was the excellent toastmistress. She introduced speakers, all of whom were brief and good, particularly Walt McDougall, whose anecdotage, unlike that of most older men, is filled with sparkle and verve. The constant Sigmund Spaeth had bronchitis, but managed to speak and shepherded the Ritz Quartette to a place of eminence while they sang the well known "Barber Shop Ballads". Martha Ostenso told how she spent her prize money and was splendidly youthful. Elinor Wylie paid the booksellers a graceful compliment or two and was fittingly garbed in black and silver. F. W. Bronson, introduced as a football player whose first novel "Spring Running" was about to appear, rose and bowed with shyness becoming a fledgling and a football player. John Erskine made a brilliant speech, including a few terse remarks on the small numbers of people who really read books in America. Fannie Hurst added the lustre of her presence and the sound and sight of her usual quantities of jingling scarlet bracelets. At our table were Harry Gould, general manager of the American News Company, and his charming wife and daughter. Also Mrs. John Purroy Mitchel, widow of the late mayor of New York City, and the gay and graceful Bill Corrigan. Dancing was quietly indulged in later in the evening, and all in all it augured well for the future of books that the lady booksellers found Terpsichore so excellent a goddess. From Boston came Herbert Jenkins of Little, Brown and Company; from Philadelphia, Mr. Shoemaker of the Penn Publishing Company.

Even the statue of Garibaldi in Washington Square yesterday looked up with a realization of spring. New York University flooded the park with students, the sky took on a gala appearance, with piles of white clouds rimmed with rose. Old men and young, recovering from the "flu", wandered through the park, and those who were more daring sat on the benches. A lady in a green homespun suit and a green hat paused in the park to look at the sky. She wore low heeled tan shoes and walked determinedly, as indeed she always walks. We met, shook hands, and made the only remark which seemed at the moment appropriate. "Well," said Willa Cather, "spring is really here." "Thank heaven!" said I, and we went our separate ways with no comment on the state of American literature, or the fluctuation of the book market. The later hours were devoted to my class in book reviewing at New York University. Herewith let me recount a curious fact, that Fitzgerald's "All the Sad Young Men" is the one book the class has liked — uniformly. To be sure, some of them patronize him for writing a gay story like "Rags Martin-Jones", but they all admit that "Absolution" is first rate. This is not because they are of his generation, since the class varies in matters of age, color, creed, and whatnot. No — they all feel that he has caught the mood of the time rather better than anyone else. I hear that Scott is soon to return to this coun-

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try. I hope so. We always quarrel, but even so, it will be good to see him again. Louis Bromfield is still holding down the literary fort in Paris. From what I am told, the American litterateurs in France (not including Mr. Bromfield in this particular group) have decided to rule the intellectual destinies of America. This movement will be interesting as an experiment. I should like to step in on them incognito sometime and find out just what they do consider important in the way of life and literature. They are obviously taking their moods with great seriousness, a procedure important to the production of introspective literature, but rather trying on the friends. Soon I must make an expedition in the literary highways and byways of New York to discover where are all the people who are taking themselves seriously. For the moment they have escaped me. Still, there must be some new writers who think that the world starts and ends with the latest shiver up their spine. This state of mind is inevitable and not unpleasant, and should be adopted, I presume, by every self respecting student of the art of expression.

Small special editions of poetry seem to be coming rapidly into fashion. One of the loveliest of these is Francesco Bianco's edition of Glenway Wescott's "Natives of Rock". There are only twenty poems. They have an unusual quality as poems, but the volume is notable chiefly for its exquisite printing and the striking decorations by the publisher's daughter, Pamela Bianco. These black and white designs have a substance of great depth, and at the same time a frail beauty. They are delicately rounded, yet their general effect is one of geometrical design. I have seldom seen, I think, so lovely a book. Mr. Wescott should feel very proud to have so beautiful a setting for his verses. He appears to be at this writing somewhere in France, finishing

From "Natives of Rock"

a new novel to follow "The Apple of the Eye". He is taken with great seriousness by the young French group, which should be pleasant for an American whose public at home is admiring but small. The making of lovely books is becoming more and more of an art in America, and it is to be hoped that the market for these small volumes will justify their printing, and in greater and greater numbers. Bruce Rogers has done some particularly beautiful things of late, and I have seen others, straying in from California and the midwest. To be sure, the text is not always so worthy of its printing as is "Natives of Rock". Wescott has a Greek simplicity and a fine understanding of the clear cut image that is unusual and stimulating.

The death of R. Harold Paget, publisher and literary agent, came as a distinct shock to me, since I had talked with him over the telephone only a day or two before. In all his undertakings he was straightforward, fair, the sort of man with whom it is a pleasure to deal. He will be sadly missed. Just before

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his death he had completed work on "An Outline of Christianity: The Story of Our Civilization", which is now being published. He was the originator and editorial director of this five volume work, interdenominational in character, and containing contributions from a hundred distinguished authorities on the influence of Christianity on all departments of human life. The writers include such persons as Bishops Brent and McConnell, Dean Inge, Michael Pupin, Robert E. Speer. Mr. Paget's publishing career started with Macmillan's in London. Later he fought in the Boer War, and afterward came to America, where he managed the American branch of John Lane's for three years. For a time he was associated with Cassell and Company in London, then he returned to America some seventeen years ago and organized and carried on with his sister the Paget Literary Agency.

At the Parisien the other noon were Mr. and Mrs. Norris and Company. They are looking well. I hate to think that the time is approaching when they will be leaving for California again. Mrs. Norris has written a biographical sketch of her husband as part of the campaign for his excellent novel, "Pig Iron". Her own "The Black Flemings" seems to me the best of her romantic type of books. This little sketch of her husband is in good taste and finely done. The Norrises' life has always been an inspiration to me. It is a collaboration in many ways, and a kindly, clear headed, fine marriage. Let me quote the last part of this small booklet:

> He calls himself the happiest man in the world, and there is one woman at least who feels that he has earned his happiness. Sometimes his work is done in some tropical city, looking out upon blue seas. Sometimes in the city apartment whose windows command the southern end of Central Park. But most often in the cabin in the California coast range, with manzanita and chapparal clothing the great mountains all about him, and a colony of brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews, wife and children ready to engage him in all the country excitements of swimming and tennis, croquet and golf, picnicking and camping, when he is ready for them.
>
> One full and satisfied life, in a world of unhappy and incomplete lives; this seems to me a greater achievement than the making of a hundred fortunes — than the writing of many books.

The pain of attending the opening of "Ashes of Love" was as real as any toothache. The Countess Cathcart, brave but insensitive, acted through three acts of what seemed to be the story of her own life. The audience was far from polite. Although one can now say that politeness should have been accorded the lady, it was after all most difficult to restrain the laughter at one or two vital points in the unfolding of what was not so bad a play as it was an exhibition of the worst possible taste. Here was Eric Pinker, the English literary agent, about to sail for London, after having established an American branch of his office; Muriel Draper with, she said, a fever; Mary Lawton, biographer extraordinary, looking amazed at this unusual bit of biographical play writing; Ralph Barton; Anita Loos; and many another bright Broadway luminary. After all, what should we have done this season without the Countess Cathcart and Mrs. Irving Berlin to furnish material for humorous anecdotes? To say nothing of Anita Loos. Sitting back of Miss Loos made me acutely conscious that her "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" and the Intimate Whatnots of Colonel House are the two most discussed volumes outside literary circles. Miss Loos's naughty little heroine has quite won a place in the hearts of the country club set. I heard a genial banker say,

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"Why, but she's so young, how did she get all that dope?" It must be remembered that, after all, Miss Loos has been writing for the motion pictures for years, has spent some time in Hollywood, has two eyes in her head, and a perfectly good husband to consult. Lunching at the Ritz the other day, I was overwhelmed by the presence immediately in front of us of Marion Davies and Norma Talmadge, together, and, not far away, Edna Ferber and Gertrude Lane. George Putnam was there also. Writing that eminent publisher's name reminds me that William Beebe is in town, polishing up his new book. It seems to me that he has been expeditioning less this year than usual, but perhaps it is not time for him to be setting out. Poor Miss Ferber has been having a distressing time with titles. Laurence Stallings, returned from Hollywood, filled with enthusiasm for James Cruze who is directing his new picture, told Miss Ferber that he had seen a story in some magazine called "The Show-Boat". Going to the stands to find it, he picked up another periodical which showed forth a serial called "Gigolo". Miss Ferber began to feel that there was a hoodoo on her titles. However, it's all straight now, and "Show-Boat" is now being serialized in "The Woman's Home Companion".

Florence Ayscough writes from London that she will soon be starting back for Canada. On April fifteenth she talked about Amy Lowell at the Keats House, which was placed at her disposal by the Committee "as a token of their appreciation and as some acknowledgment of the material services rendered to the Keats House Committee by the late Miss Amy Lowell". Miss Lowell's garden in Brookline must now be in flower. Soon Mrs. Russell will have left the house; but it is to remain, I hear, in the Lowell family. I do not think I have ever known anyone whose personality seemed to live on as does Miss Lowell's. It is impossible for me to use the past tense when I think of her. Her mind was eternal. It goes on for her friends as though it continued to be a part of their existence. I turn now to the shelf on which her books are, as if I were going to her for a talk after dinner. Her poetry, her clear prose, give a magnificent picture of that magnificent personality.

The following letter from "The Editor Magazine" cries for printing, and the cry is hereby answered with due apologies:

In THE BOOKMAN for March, 1926, you print on page 125 this statement: "A thousand dollars in prizes has been offered by Walter Clare Martin through 'The Editor', Book Hill, Highland Falls, New York." As this is an error, we ask that you publish this letter to correct it. Mr. Martin is offering no prizes through "The Editor". The only relations "The Editor" has with the offer are: 1. We printed information about Mr. Martin's offer, just as we print in "The Editor" news of all kinds that may help authors to dispose of their work profitably. 2. We determined, before publishing the news, that Mr. Martin had the money wherewith to pay the prizes. 3. We should like very much indeed to see some writer win Mr. Martin's thousand, so we have done our best to give wide publicity to his offer.

It is evident from this statement that we have no real connection with the thousand dollar offer, and that we are to have nothing to do with determining the award. In fairness to both Mr. Martin and "The Editor", THE BOOKMAN should print this correction of its error. And we do *not* want manuscripts that authors desire to enter in the Martin competition sent to us!

Walking along Murray Hill, I saw a wagon with horse attached draw up in time to avoid running over a precise little old lady. She was highly incensed. "The idea", she sputtered, "of letting those horrid beasts on the

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streets!" How times have changed! Here would be the place for a sentimental ode to the horse; but I have neither the time nor the wit to write it. The circus has opened in the new Garden, and there one may go to see the famous beast in all his glory. Circus time is always a wishful time of year for

Eugene O'Neill

me. Last year I missed it, which was a huge disappointment. This season I shall try to inveigle Marc Connelly into going with me. That would be a treat—for the circus, of course. The first thing any of your friends is likely to say to you these days is, "Do you know what 'The Great God Brown' is all about?" Well, I haven't seen it, but apparently there is something about this particular brand of symbolism which O'Neill has given us that arouses popular curiosity. There are others who insist on discussing John Dos Passos's play "The Moon is a Gong", of the expressionistic variety, and still others who actually saw John Howard Lawson's "Nirvana", which appeared briefly in the neighborhood of Greenwich Village. Lawson is rapidly becoming a cult and a legend. He is a quiet man with a keen interest in any problem which happens into the conversation and no very great apparent ego which leads him to attempt to dominate the scene. Perhaps this is the very quality which makes him so many friends and staunch supporters. He is the sort of person who seems destined to be a great playwright in the minds of the few — which means that his progress, like that of Eugene O'Neill, will probably be slow but sure. Some people are bound to build success on failure. A failure as much discussed as "Nirvana" has been cannot be considered a failure. At the moment John Lawson is living in Stamford, Connecticut, and working hard on the manuscript of another play.

Katharine Hopkins Chapman, president for Alabama of the League of American Pen Women, and also president of the Alabama Writers' Conclave, sends the following sketch of a coming Alabama author. Mrs. Chapman recently attended the Biennial of the Pen Women in Washington.

Sara Haardt, whose first stories appeared in the March issues of "The Century" and "The Mercury", lives in Montgomery, Alabama. It would have been inconsistent if she had been reared in Decatur, for that town was named for the naval commander who said, "My country, right or wrong!" Decatur, you'll recall, lived up to his sentiments by boarding and burning the captured "Philadelphia" in the harbor of Tripoli, an act which Nelson said was the most daring of the age. Alabama once had two Decaturs, but after long and bitter controversy, only one remains. Symbolic? Who shall say? Some Alabamans resented Sara Haardt's article on Alabama in "The Mercury" last August, but it was so mildly critical compared with the diatribe of which Clement Wood was guilty toward his native state, that thoughtful readers decided hers was fair appraisal.

Speaking of the captured ship, Miss Haardt has not yet been captured, unless it be by "Career", as she calls her book soon to be published. Several years ago when the Writers' Department of the Alabama Federation of Women's Clubs was inaugurated, Sara Haardt won the first prize for her "Lines to a Young Professor". Those who saw her then naturally wondered if a personal interest in some professor had inspired the slip of a girl, but evidently not,

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at least not seriously. Some of her verse, notably "White Violets", appeared in THE BOOKMAN.

Recently while waiting in a Montgomery hotel for her to keep a luncheon engagement, I speculated on what changes two years of instructing at Goucher and study at Hopkins, together with the ever present writing, might have effected. Overwork had forced her to come home and rest a year but this gave her time to polish and place "The Mendelian Dominant" in the March "Mercury", "All in the Family" in "The Century", and other stories not yet scheduled.

She came promptly. We instantly discovered mutual preference for sea foods and adjourned to the Pickwick Café which specializes therein. Isn't it joyful and simplifying when friends enjoy the same foods as well as avocations? (Poor John Farrar, from Vermont, you probably don't know crab jambalaya. It would make your eyes water and you hair turn even redder, but you'd ask for more!)

Across table I studied the new, the now Sara Haardt. Poise she always had and always will have. Strong features feminized by clear, creamy skin. White teeth flashing behind full red lips when she smiles, which is seldom and apparently with reluctance. Her brown hair is so light that it causes her brown eyes to appear almost black. The usual expression of her large, long eyes is sombre and introspective. But they can beam with naive wonder, as when an older person shows sympathy with the young intelligentsia; or when she, who had been secluded for a year, noting the gay hats flocking into the café, suddenly realized that spring is here!

Fortunate Sara Haardt, to have achieved the beginnings of success in writing, and reasonable assurance of more, while it is spring with her. She leaves in May to spend the summer in the north. Watch for her summer fruition.

Miss I. A. R. Wylie gave a dinner party the other evening at which several serious editors, including Messrs. Vance of "Pictorial Review" and Costain of "The Saturday Evening Post", might have been seen doing the Virginia reel. To be sure, Rebecca West was of the opinion that it was nothing but an English country dance after all; at any rate, visiting English authors might aid Mr. Ford to bring back this good old dance to America. It has a true air of fineness on East Sixtieth Street, where the inclusive patrons of an exclusive café seemed not at all startled by the apparition of literary New York City tripping lightly through the homely measures. Miss Wylie, it seems, has taken a house in America for the summer, Edward Davison is about to live here forever, and Miss West says that she returns to England with great regret. It is a fact for noting that these charming authors, only one of whom is lecturing here, find America a good place in which to live. The attitude toward us has apparently changed since the days of Dickens. Nevertheless, all of our own young authors, and older ones too for that matter, are now preparing to go to Europe for the summer, or even longer. Most of them, of course, will seek the south of France. One hears of passages booked for hither and yon. It will be sad for the editors to have all the authors away, will it not? A question not to be answered one way or another with much tact, I fear. It will be far sadder for the editors to be here all summer. Nevertheless, as I always remark at this time of year, New York is not a bad place in the summertime. It is not warmer than most places, it is convenient to numerous resorts of coolth and gaiety, and out of town visitors are continually passing through on their way to and from Europe or Maine or some such place. They kindly call on a lonely editor — and there you are — a summer quite as full as any winter season.

The Mosher Press has just published in lovely pamphlet form "Six Sonnets" by Thomas S. Jones, Jr. Alexander Woollcott has recently been giving the author much publicity, recalling the fact that Mr. Jones witnessed the Stanford White murder and never thought to go direct to his paper to

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report it. Jones is far from practical, but then he has written some of the loveliest lyrics in our language. What a triumph of mysticism is the following sonnet:

ARTHUR

Behind storm-fretted bastions gray and bare
Flame-crested warriors of Cunedda's line
Feast in a golden ring, — their targes shine
Along the wall and clang to gusts of air;
And in the shadow, torches blown aflare
Reveal a chief, half human, half divine,
With brooding head, starred by the Dragon Sign,
Hung motionless in some undreamed despair.

But when he starts, three torques of twisted gold
Writhe on his breast, for voices all men fear
Wail forth the battle-doom dead kings have borne;
And as the mead-hall fills with sudden cold,
Above the wind-tossed sea his heart can hear
The strange gods calling through their mystic horn.

"The Writer", under the able direction of W. D. Kennedy, is rapidly gaining in weight and usefulness. It is an excellent magazine. Robert Hillyer's discussion of the technique of modern poetry in the March issue, for example, is clear and important to any student of poetry. I heartily recommend this magazine to the beginning writer, or anyone interested in the craft of authorship. I like particularly these paragraphs from an editorial by the editor:

"The Writer" will not waste any effort trying to persuade people to write for publication, if only for the purpose of saving the energies of the staff for other more important work. It will try to help writers of all classes and in all stages of progress in the solution of problems of technique arising in their work. It will, morever, attempt to help them in marketing their completed work. This help will be given both through the columns of "The Writer" and by such other means of rendering individual service as we can devise.

In attempting to include both the successful writer and the beginner among our readers, we assume an absence of vanity on both sides. The apprentice must dismiss his natural craving for delicious sympathy for his experimental efforts, and substitute, instead, his own harsh criticism of his own work. That, we hope, he can learn from "The Writer". The successful writer must be ready to admit that, though he knows all there is to be known about the technique of the short story, he may yet learn something from the novelist, the poet, and the essayist.

Carl J. Smalley, of McPherson, Kansas, has published an exquisite book of twenty seven drawings by William Blake. Blake to me is one of the most fascinating of literary and artistic figures. As in the case of William Morris, his artistic career moved along with his literary ambitions to an extraordinary degree. If you have never seen any of the collections of his paintings and drawings, you should find one. His line is serene; his mysticism now ornate, now delicate; his design fascinating. I can think of few lovelier gift books than this one. How amusing life would be if one could spend most of it in a library or a museum, surrounded by books and paintings, closely in touch with the beauties of the past and present in art and literature, with nothing to do but to read, to look, to learn, perhaps occasionally to write. Would one soon, I wonder, long for direct contact with life, or would one be able to dream away existence in the contemplation of the beauty, joy, and terror that other men have found in life?

The censorship question is again rampant in London, according to news which drifts across the Atlantic. It is reported that Shane Leslie has withdrawn his own book, "The Cantab", from publication. Attention was first drawn to the novel by the Bishop of Northampton, who expressed regret that it should have been written by a

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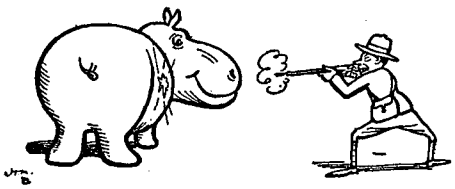
Roman Catholic. To this criticism the author is said to have replied that he was withdrawing his "lamentable book". This is a somewhat new attitude for an author to take on his own work. Shane Leslie has been editor of "The Dublin Review" since 1916. He is a cousin of Winston Churchill and eldest son of Sir John Leslie, Bart. The "Daily Dispatch" published the following editorial on "Book Censors":

Once again, in somewhat melodramatic form, the question of a literary censorship has cropped up. Because a well-known author has written a novel of which he is thoroughly ashamed, now that his spiritual pastor has told him how unpleasant it is, well-meaning busybodies would institute a council of censorship to tell us what we may or may not read. The idea is foredoomed to failure. It has been put forward previously, but was found to be both unnecessary and impracticable.

We prefer to agree with Mr. G. H. Grubb, member of a well-known publishing firm, that the man-in-the-street is the best council of censorship. Besides, as the present case shows, there is always the Director of Public Prosecutions in the background. Indecency and common sense do not go hand in hand. And as a nation we have lost neither our sense of decency nor our fund of common sense.

It seems most appropriate that Langford Reed's "A Book of Nonsense Verse" should come close upon the heels of spring, which is really, after all, the most nonsensical of the seasons, what with the circus, straw hats, and lovers. About a year ago Mr. Reed's "Complete Limerick Book" waved a friendly greeting to the interested, and ever since my own copy has been practically dropping with the exhaustion of overuse. This newest collection of nonsense verse is most catholic in point of time covered, beginning as it does with "The Campaign of the Horses" by Aristophanes and ending with "For I Am Sad" by Don Marquis, and the selection of verse is admirable. It is not in any sense a source book, nor



I shoot the hippopotamus with bullets made of platinum
Because if I use leaden ones his hide is sure to flatten 'em.

HILAIRE BELLOC

— From "A Book of Nonsense Verse"

does it claim to be exhaustive, but as a survey of and introduction to this gorgeous playground of Thalia, it is excellent. An added joy is the drawing of H. M. Bateman, that most hilarious of modern illustrators.

Third hand information is sometimes dangerous, yet this bit is so amusing I cannot resist. A lady who recently heard Chris Morley lecture, says that Chris Morley said that Joseph Hergesheimer said that the marcel wave was chief of the factors that made woman different from the other animals. However you look at it, there's probably libel involved. Speaking of libel, I have always wondered why people do not sue papers which publish someone else's picture marked plainly by their own name. Milton, the poet, however, cannot very well sue his detractors. Portraits of Milton and Pope were recently exhibited in the New York Public Library, and not the least interesting part of the exhibition was the various fictitious portraits of Milton, solemnly and repeatedly copied by engravers. Would it not be amusing to hire a publicity man to go to every newspaper which had in its "morgue" a picture, say, of Booth Tarkington, and somehow convince the staff that a picture of, say, Ellis Parker Butler was really that of Mr. Tarkington? It would be like

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the experience which two charming young ladies, Rebecca West the author, and Jane West the literary agent, had several years ago. They had many mutual friends, and those friends were always telephoning the wrong number. Engagements were mixed. Finally, in desperation, Jane West decided that she would determinedly autograph all of Rebecca West's books which unsuspecting and unbelieving persons brought to her. She would *say* distinctly, "I'm not Rebecca West." They would smile indulgently and reply, "Oh, aren't you amusing, of course you are!" The ways of the autograph collector are devious. A charming old gentleman came in to my office yesterday. "I *must* have a letter written by Sir Philip Gibbs", he informed me. "I have letters by all the presidents and their *wives*, and I can't get one of Philip Gibbs." "Well," I replied, "if I have one I'll give it to you." "But," said the old gentleman, "it must be an *interesting* letter." Which somehow discouraged me. Not that Sir Philip writes uninteresting letters, you know.

California must be a place of writers in varying moods. Franklin Wolf, who used to be at Yale, and who wrote lyrics and worked in a bank here in New York City, has turned up out there in the artists' colony. Occasionally he writes me of the interesting doings:

> For example, last Saturday night we had a session on Macondray Street. George Sterling was there and read an unpublished poem. Then he talked about Sinclair Lewis (who is here today, by the way) and Edgar Lee Masters and Sandburg's new book. I held the floor for a while on Dreiser's "American Tragedy" and Robinson Jeffers (who lives at Carmel, you know). Then my wife read John V. A. Weaver's "More in American" — very effective. John D. Barry, lecturer and critic, was there, arguing with a former German ace, Rehorst by name, a friend of Hugo Stinnes. We had excellent music by Joan London and Rose Parrish. Then the conversation among different groups began to grow serious (as it tends to when the sense of humor is lost among any "little group of serious thinkers") and it was 5 A.M. when the party broke up.

Then, Bob Roe sends me the billhead of his Spanish Craft Forge at Monterey, which he is carrying on with R. V. Howard. It is a most unusual billhead, for it bears on the back a verse from one of Bob's poems.

Milton Einstein of 295 Fifth Avenue is bringing out a rather lovely edition of some new poems of Herbert Gorman. The book is replenished with a few designs by Mary Small. These poems, by the way, are far ahead of any Gorman has written in the past. He seems to have escaped in them from the strictures which were holding in a really flaming and yet tender imagination. There are lovely things like "Chanson Primitif", pagan in tone, or beautiful melodious things like the sonnet "Antæus". This volume, slight as it is, is to my mind a really important book of poetry. Gorman, by the way, is one of the Americans who will flee to France this summer. He will finish his biography of Longfellow, then take passage for Europe, where he will begin work on a new modern novel. His "The Two Virginities" will be published in the autumn. He has been discovering, it seems, that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was quite human in his needs and in some of his moods. This biography should prove a most interesting experiment. It should epitomize, in a sense, a whole period, a period which, while it had no brilliant or scandalous lights to recommend it to the jaded palate, still produced an important literature and a system of thought which has shadowed us practically ever since. It is amusing to

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think that the same man who elected to do a critical biography of James Joyce has turned to the Victorian figure of our white poet. He has treated him, too, with a good measure of sympathy.

Greybeards whose acquaintance with F. P. A. goes back to that small column in the New York "Evening Mail" of prewar days, will clutch to their bosoms "The Conning Tower Book", a collection of verses selected by Mr. Adams from those contributed to his columns in the "Mail", the "Tribune", and the "World". Besides our old friends Flaccus, Baron Ireland, Isosceles, and such, we come upon the names of Kathleen Norris, Julian Street, Lee Wilson Dodd, William Allen White, Samuel Merwin, and a goodly number of others. Then there is the "English Song Book" edited by Harold Scott, which gives the words and music of songs popular in eighteenth and nineteenth century England. "The Old Armchair" and its ilk are here, together with such alluring pieces as "The Amorous Party", "Joan's Placket is Torn", "Tippitiwitchet", "Please Sell No More Drink to My Father". Suburban housewives will sigh as they read this "Housemaid's Song":

I pray you gently list to me,
I'm young and strong and clean to see;
I'll not turn tail to any she
For work that's in the country.

Of all your house the charge I take,
I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake,
And more can do than here I'll speak,
Depending on your bounty.

To take a flying leap from these simple lays, let us record that Frederick H. Martens has packed into "A Thousand and One Nights of Opera" information concerning the stories and music of some fifteen hundred operas and ballets. The book is unique in that it groups the operas according to the period of which the plots treat. Now that the Metropolitan has become the storm centre of curiosity seekers as well as music lovers, and threatens to move into larger quarters to accommodate its increasing audiences, first aids to the newly initiated should certainly be in order.

There is a wise understanding of the right to sentimentality in literature, in Christopher Morley's introduction to the thirtieth anniversary edition of "The Jessamy Bride", that tender story of Oliver Goldsmith which has pleased thousands of readers. I have always liked Morley's tolerance for the sweet book. In part, he says:

> It ["The Jessamy Bride"] is one of my private candidates for the world's most sentimental book. It represents Oliver as that curious mixture of Nature's Nobleman and complete simpleton that has become traditional. It would require a more careful scholar than I to offer any opinion as to whether the Goldsmith of Mr. Moore's novel is confirmed by all available testimony. But at any rate Frankfort Moore teaches us to love him, and that is the first step toward understanding. My secret notion is that Goldsmith, like Lamb and other writers of peculiarly subtle humor, has been rather too patronizingly pigeonholed as one of the "poor dear delightful" fellows. He was a good deal more than the Good-Natured Man, and it's odd that the writer who specially approved "comedies not merely sentimental" should have been so gallantly sentimentalized by his lovers. I cannot help believing that there must have been other elements in the affair between him and Mary Horneck besides those emphasized in this book; in the closing chapters of the romance you can almost hear the anguished reader, standing tiptoe on the margin of the page, shouting himself hoarse imploring Oliver to Take Her! But the actual statistics of that love story we shall never know, I suppose; and Mr. Moore's object being to wring the heart he succeeds perfectly.

I should like to quote a part of John McCrae's address at the annual meeting of the National Association of Book

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Publishers. Mr. McCrae is the president of that organization and of E. P. Dutton and Company.

In my judgment, the movement for stabilizing and expanding the publishing business has just begun, the opportunity for organization and cooperation is increasing. The value of the distributive system for books depends on the health of the whole organization, and little things have to be ironed out or friction will creep in. Nothing should be too small for attention, if it is significant. Our prosperity may lead us to become careless. Someone has said — "Genius is the infinite capacity for taking pains" — our business is one of ceaseless detail and care.

We must keep up our standards, *good books* must be our battle cry. This must mean worthwhile books in their particular field, good paper, well printed, properly bound, but above all well distributed; and this is a task to try the mettle of any publisher.

Good publishing cannot exist without good bookselling; they are as essential to each other as the eye is to the brain and the brain is to the eye. I am gratified to see an ever increasing growth of good will between publishers and booksellers. The prosperity and growth of the publishing business is in my judgment absolutely dependent upon the bookseller; we must, therefore, be careful to safeguard and enlarge the sphere and prosperity of the bookseller. Looking into the future, I am hopeful that ways and means may be found which will safeguard the public and yet will permit publishers and booksellers to work together in a lawful way for the better distribution of books to the general public.

"A Portrait Gallery of American Editors", photographs by Doris Ulmann of forty three of our editors' faces, with discussions by them of the problems of editing, is a luxurious and satisfying book. Mrs. Ulmann's photographs are most unusual. The book itself, issued by William Edwin Rudge, is a masterpiece of printing and design. The type is a new one, designed by Goudy. Several of the editors' essays have already appeared in these pages. I shall reproduce here a part of that by Merle Crowell, editor of "The American Magazine", because it gives the philosophy of an editor who is very close to a certain section of the American people:

There are two ways in which an editor may make everyday living easier for men and women. One way is to lead them away from life into the playgrounds of the imagination, where they may forget their troubles for the time being; the other is to illuminate life — with all its realities and problems — so that it may be lived more intelligently and more abundantly.

By inclination and by conviction I am dedicated to the second plan of editing. To express my conception of this plan, a magazine must be, first of all, a friendly publication. Back of each page must be an honest interest in human beings — a sympathy with the decent ambitions of the average man and woman.

Will Lengel is foreign editorial representative of the International Magazine Company in London. The columnist of the London "Graphic" gossips of his activities as follows:

It is good news for English authors that William Lengel, the American who will have spent nearly £100,000 this year in buying articles and fiction over here, is to stay on, still buying, until next October.

He has just returned from rounding up a number of English novelists on the Continent, including Robert Hichens, W. J. Locke, and Phillips Oppenheim. He also called on Maeterlinck and Ibáñez. Ibáñez is going to write a number of historical-romantic-biographical novels for him.

Maeterlinck he was never able to catch. He went to his lovely villa at Nice and found that he had gone to another near Paris, and when he went there found that the author of "The Blue Bird" had flitted to Brussels.

Locke's hospitality was as delightful as ever, Lengel told me. Hichens showed him round Marseilles, and made his blood curdle with stories of Shanghaiing, which still flourishes gaily along the waterfront. Phillips Oppenheim took him into the Casino at Monte, where he won two thousand francs. The word went round that he was breaking the bank, and a large crowd collected. "Everyone pointed me out and gossiped about me for the rest of the time I was there," Lengel told me, "and in fact I had only won a few pounds."

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